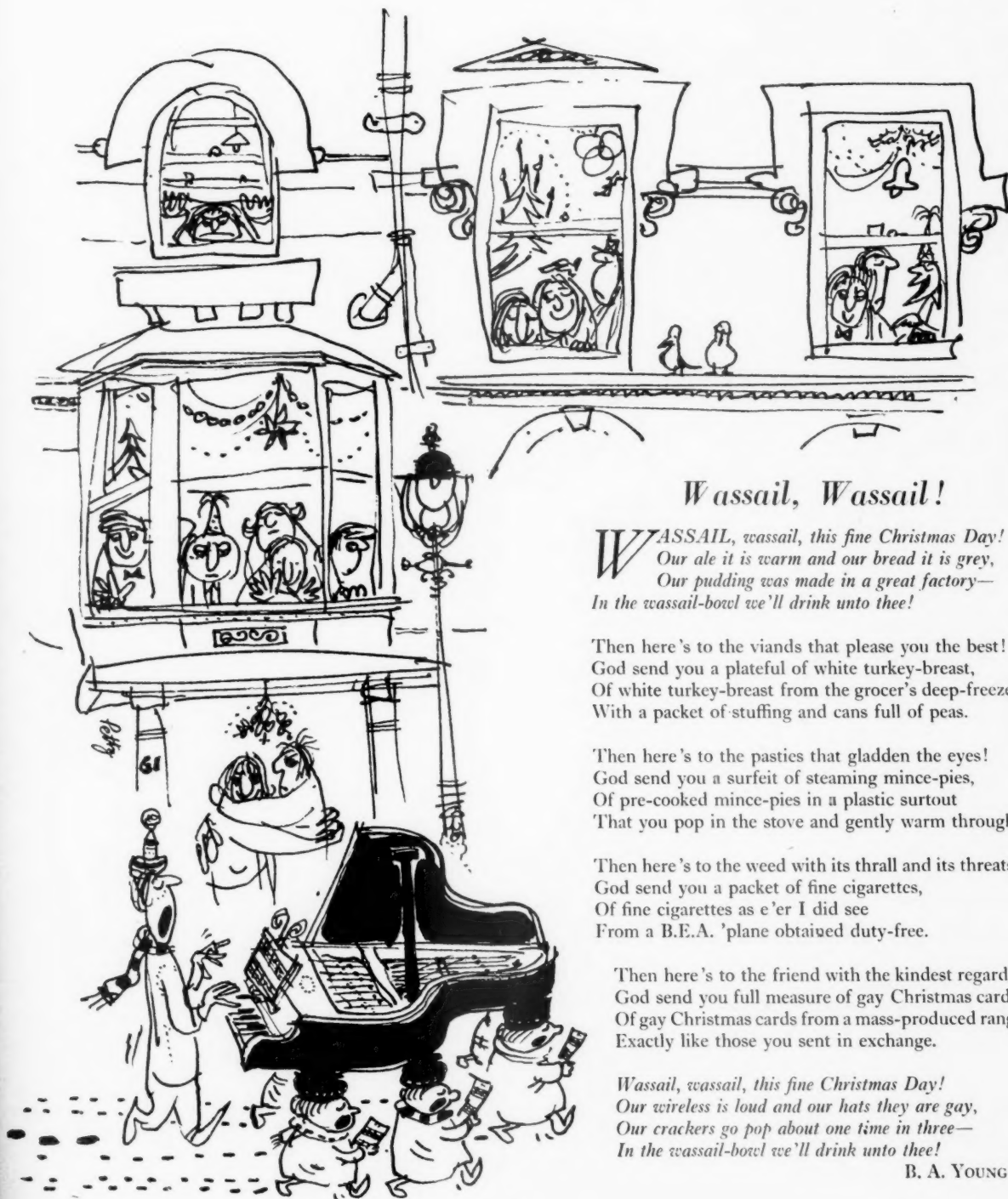


Christmas Number



Wassail, Wassail!

WASSAIL, wassail, this fine Christmas Day!
Our ale it is warm and our bread it is grey,
Our pudding was made in a great factory—
In the wassail-bowl we'll drink unto thee!

Then here's to the viands that please you the best!
God send you a plateful of white turkey-breast,
Of white turkey-breast from the grocer's deep-freeze,
With a packet of stuffing and cans full of peas.

Then here's to the pasties that gladden the eyes!
God send you a surfeit of steaming mince-pies,
Of pre-cooked mince-pies in a plastic surtout
That you pop in the stove and gently warm through.

Then here's to the weed with its thrall and its threats!
God send you a packet of fine cigarettes,
Of fine cigarettes as e'er I did see
From a B.E.A. 'plane obtained duty-free.

Then here's to the friend with the kindest regards!
God send you full measure of gay Christmas cards,
Of gay Christmas cards from a mass-produced range
Exactly like those you sent in exchange.

Wassail, wassail, this fine Christmas Day!
Our wireless is loud and our hats they are gay,
Our crackers go pop about one time in three—
In the wassail-bowl we'll drink unto thee!

B. A. YOUNG

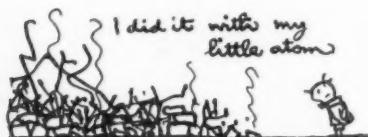
Chairman

December 11, '57

A LEADER-COLUMN campaign exhorting shopkeepers to cut their prices during the few remaining shopping-days to Christmas is expected to receive the Press Council annual award for the most hopeless crusade of the year.

SMEARS are flying thick and fast: now Mr. Mohammed Heikal, editor of Cairo's *Al Ahram*, has come back from Moscow with a story that the late Lavrenti Beria not only betrayed his trust as secret police chief but "kept a harem of young girls." Naturally this disclosure has sent a thrill of horror and disgust throughout the Middle East.

MORE of America's arms production, according to a report, is to be turned over to "pint-sized" little atomic weapons "just big enough to wipe out



an army division or so." It is expected that when one or two more places have shared Camborne's recent educational Civil Defence experience, when a "mock atom explosion" broke windows in the Methodist chapel, C.D. organizers will be able to borrow a few and move on to still more useful exercises.

THOSE two boys in Minnesota who have received excited and admiring world press mention for sending a mouse up 1,600 feet in a home-made rocket, which then crashed and killed it, must not overlook a debt of gratitude to the space pioneers of the Soviet Union. It is entirely due to Russia's lead, with the well-known pioneer dog, that a new liberalism is being extended to boys everywhere: a Fifth Freedom—to do what you fancy with animals if it means getting to the moon first. Of course,

Benches will take some time to catch up, especially in this country, where four lads were viciously fined for maltreating a hedgehog last week. Though, to be fair to the magistrates, it was on the ground.

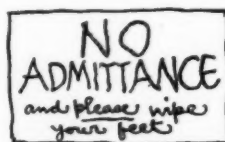
No doubt with dramatic intent, journalistic emphasis was placed on the smallness of the dispatch-case in which



Sir William Penney took our secrets across the Atlantic to exchange for American space-missile know-how. By these standards, of course, the really big dramatic moment will be his return with one of those pellets in a matchbox.

EXPLORERS of the old school had no intelligible comment to make on reports that Dr. Vivian Fuchs hung over a sixty-foot crevasse in "a Snocat called Rock 'n' Roll."

SIR ANTHONY and Lady Eden must have been touched by the consideration of the South East Cornwall Conservative Association, reported to have guarded



against "nosey-neighbour trouble" by posting STRICTLY PRIVATE notices at the three entrances to their new home in the deep south-west, and given added confidence by their landlord's assurance that people would "respect any desire of Sir Anthony's for privacy." However,

when they postponed the moving-in day, said a later report, "sightseers crowding round the house . . . were disappointed."

DESPITE all the talk about slashing government expenditure nothing really impressive was done until last week, when it was announced that by supplying thinner string to postmen the G.P.O. was planning to save £23,000 a year. Mr. Ernest Marples has once more demonstrated his shrewd publicity sense. Only a day or two before, when headlines announced that the generals were worried over proposed cuts in arms spending of £150,000,000, the public registered nothing but a lot of meaningless noughts: but tell a man he's being saved £23,000 every now and again and he really feels he's getting somewhere.

A MORE appealing feature of the great leak inquiry was provided by Miss Susan



Chataway, who epitomized the starry-eyed innocence of extreme youth by attempting to converse "in joking fashion" with the Foreign Office official she met on the train.

STUDENTS of Admiralty news and affairs were interested to note that a destroyer recently returned to home waters is called H.M.S. *Armada*. This sounds like an inspired bit of bluff.

By Yon Bonny Brecks

BEFORE good Scottish blood is spilt In feuds between the trews and kilt

The War Office should start a rumour That they are going to devise A reasonable compromise

On lines laid down by Mrs. Bloomer.



DANGER: PEERS AT WORK

Do You Believe in Sequels?

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

OVER forty-nine years after its first and only performance on any stage, Barrie's epilogue to *Peter Pan** at last reaches an impatient public. It is an additional act, scene or codicil in which Wendy is a Mummy and Nana too old for an exacting role—she only “rises, is weak on legs, barks feebly” when Peter takes off through the nursery window with baby Jane. The tidy-minded may regret that publication wasn't held up until the round fiftieth anniversary of these delights, but the date would fall in February, when the most sanguine publisher has to recognize that the Christmas book market has had it.

The only presentation of *When Wendy Grew Up* was one night in 1908, when it followed, seemingly on impulse, an ordinary performance of *Peter Pan* proper; this sneak preview caught the critics by surprise, none being present but the representative of the *Liverpool Daily Post*—a strange chance, as the theatre was in the West End of London; so only Liverpool readers learnt of his opinion that the new work was “the finest thing that Mr. Barrie has done,” and must have been disappointed at not being able to see it, London being one hundred and ninety-three miles away and the run, in any case, ended.

Leafing through the ten pages of the

*“When Wendy Grew Up,” by J. M. Barrie. Nelson, 7 6

work—the print is readably large—it is hard to see, at this remove, just what prompted the *Post* man to such extravagance. Of course he was in no danger of contradiction, and knew it; a glance round the auditorium had shown him that A. B. Walkley and Co. were exercising their critical faculties elsewhere; and the Baby Mermaid, coming before the curtain at the end of the main course to introduce the *bombe surprise*, had stated positively that it “would never be done again.” (I quote from Mr. Sydney Blow's foreword.) Even so, his assertion seems sweeping. Could it be that old emotions stirred him? That he was a Pan-fan from way back, besotted with childish recollections of the Barrie magic? Hardly. *Peter Pan* itself had only burst on the world for the first time four years earlier, and it is to be assumed that the *Post* critic-to-be was even then past the age of squealing his belief in the existence of fairies.

Perhaps it was the plot and construction, the sheer technical skill of the thing, that impressed so deeply; but even this seems doubtful. The plot is that Wendy is putting Jane to bed when Peter arrives and takes the tot off flying. It has compactness, but there isn't the work in it that you get with a run-of-the-mill Agatha Christie. There is the dialogue, of course, but from the opening line of Jane's, “Won't go to bed,

Mummy, won't go to bed!” to Wendy's closing conversation with the dog there is nothing to write itself in letters of fire on a critic's heart . . . Wendy telling Jane that she is a “Naughtikins,” Peter saying “Hooray! Hooray!” and Nana occasionally moaning from the bed in the corner that used to be John's. (WENDY (p. 3): Heigh-ho! and to think that John has a beard now, and that Michael is an engine-driver.) The moans of Nana may have something to do with a troubled conscience: Wendy has some rather disconcerting disclosures on p. 6: “. . . two or three times she became just an ordinary dog and stayed out so late with bad companions that father had to get up at two in the morning in his pyjamas to let her in.” Apart from a joking reference to stocks and shares, this is the only mention of Mr. Wendy—a suspiciously vague delineation. From these few extracts it will be seen that there are no lines here with the zing and snap of “Don't let Tinker die.”

However, whether or not the *Post* man was right, and whether or not anyone else paid any attention to him, it seems reasonable to suppose that Barrie himself took his notice keenly to heart. “The finest thing that Mr. Barrie has done.” It was enough to put any man off. Laurels are best rested on—even for a playwright working in the commercial theatre who has already successfully revived two favourite characters (three, counting Nana); and it looks very much as if J. M. B. took the hint, accepted that his highest peak had been touched, and decided to leave well alone. Many a time, wandering in Kensington Gardens “in his old ulster and muffler, his cap pulled down over his eyes” (Mr. Blow is full of attractive cameos), he must have contemplated further instalments, with Wendy as a suffragette, or Mr. and Mrs. Darling running a theatrical lodging-house, but always that phrase from the *Liverpool Daily Post* came trickling back and dowsed the inspiration. But for that nameless critic and his chance intervention on that night of February 22, 1908, further episodes to the well-loved classic might have been continually added, first by Barrie, later by any other man of the theatre who could



fight his way through the copyright loopholes to a good thing. Something of the following kind might well have been among the later examples:

(*The Scene, for economy's sake, is still the Darling nursery. JOHN is in bed, his beard outside the covers, and MICHAEL, in railwayman's uniform, is taking his boots off. NANA stands stiffly in the corner. It is late evening. WENDY emerges from the bathroom, with teapot and cup on a tray. It is her sixty-sixth birthday. She is gay.*)

WENDY (*sitting with a gay sigh*): How funny you are, Michael, coming in and going straight to bed. Should I tell you the story?

MICHAEL: I've been shunting all afternoon. (*Puts coat and cap on NANA*).

WENDY (*pours gin from teapot*): About Peter Pan, and how he flew off with me, and then with little Jane, and then William and Arthurkins and that little girl of Mrs. Frobisher's who'd popped in for a screw of salt. And how the—Michael, you shouldn't put your clothes on Nana; she's got the moth already; I don't think that Lost Boy stuffed her with very good stuff. (*She pours.*) Give John a shake, for he is on nights.

(MICHAEL *gets into bed, sleeps.*)

JOHN (*sits up*): I heard that. Has Peter come? I want him to fly off with Nana. I'm going to shave. Hooray! Hooray!

[*Exit to bathroom*]

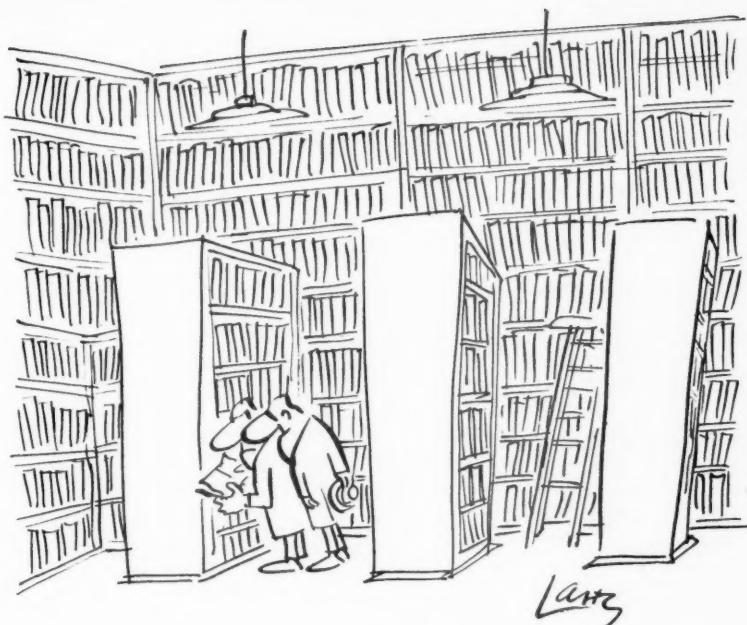
WENDY (*fondly*): And to think that Slightly is a company lawyer.

(*The windows suddenly fly open and a figure stands there. It is Margaret Lockwood. CAPTAIN HOOK crawls out from under John's bed and Exit.*)

♫ ♫

"Frau Elfi von Werra is . . . the widow of — the Luftwaffe hero, whose amazing escapades furnished the plot for the book and film, *The One That Got Away* . . . So when she said that Hitler's teachings had made her lot in life much harder to bear I took her word for it, although I am usually somewhat sceptical of anti-Hitler sentiments coming from such sources . . . But I could understand Frau von Werra's point of view . . . Her job is running the German branch of Elizabeth Arden . . . 'But I have to fight against ten years of Nazi propaganda that a woman's place is in the home, and in the home you don't need lipstick' . . . Frau von Werra sighed . . ."—*Daily Mail*

That man's certainly got a lot to answer for.



Bed-Sitter

SOME day, no doubt, I shall move on from here;
Persons unknown will enter without knocking,
And in the cupboard where I keep the beer
A single girl will hang her double stocking,

Or a dark student flash his questing teeth.
Though in another room my goods assemble,
Will they some lingering memory bequeath
To this past place, and on its echoes tremble,

So that this crooked street from painted Var
Shines momentarily before the puzzled stranger,
Or wall-hung shade of sword or of guitar
Troubles his mind with discord or with danger?

No; for I never catch the slightest glimpse
Of vanished secretaries dimly knitting;
Across the room no phantom bank-clerk limps;
No faded spinster in my armchair sitting

Disputes my title to its nubbly clutch;
No spectral broker through the door comes reeling.
'The room's long past adds up to nothing much:
Just living-space without a shred of feeling.

R. P. LISTER

The New Mayhew—



—In a Night Haunt



NE aspect of the distressing plight of a certain section of the London male poor may readily be seen by a visit to one of the numerous houses of the night (or night-clubs, as they are known among *habitués*) in the West End of the city. Here, in surroundings of tawdry glitter, meals of rich food may be ordered until the small hours of the morning, and consumed with costly wines and spirits. The privilege of thus deliberately disorganizing the digestive processes was, until the late wars, jealously held by what had come to be known as the *monied class*: to-day, however, this unnatural habit is also frequently indulged in by those who were once content to take what pleasure they could by reading accounts of it in the news-sheets: and it is their miserable fate now to discover that there is no joy in it.

Let us consider the wretched condition of these unfortunates. Minor executives of commercial firms, their poverty is such that, of eight typical members of the class whom I was able to question, three had but one serviceable suit, and only two had taken more than a fortnight's holiday in the past three years; they can afford neither comfortable seats at the play, nor membership of any club more noteworthy than their local Conservative or British Legion Club; if they were suddenly required to contribute from their own pockets to the upkeep of their motor-cars our roads would regain their peaceful rural appearance overnight; in their homes a bottle of gin is expected to last a month; they normally pay no more than four shillings for their lunch; their wives (poor, unfashionable drabs) fight an endless war against the growing cost of life's necessities, and can be heard crying together over coffee after a morning's shopping in any suburb.

Yet this benighted man, due to an ironic whim of Industry, is compelled from time to time (and some quite regularly) to spend long hours in one or other of the night haunts, in the company of some equally impoverished member of a firm with which his employers hope to transact some profitable business, as it may be the buying or selling of plastic tea-cups. With gabardine raincoats over their evening clothes, they enter the night-house of their choice: and here they are forced to remain until they have incurred a bill large enough to satisfy the sellers of the tea-cups that appropriate business acumen has been displayed, and the buyers that their custom is regarded as sufficiently desirable. This bill is paid by one or other of the employers, and thereafter claimed as *expenses* against income tax.

I was enabled, through the good offices of a superintendent of police, to form an impression at first hand of one of these melancholy resorts of the night. Its entrance, in a side street mainly occupied by the prostitutes who form such a dubious attraction for tourists in the fashionable parts of this great city, gave but little indication of the gaudy splendours within. A band of exceptionally pale musicians played what was evidently music for dancing, although it was at first not easy to determine, by reason of the dimness of the illumination, how many of the inmates were availing themselves of this doleful amenity. The air was drugged with the mingled smells of perfume, cigar- and cigarette-smoke [five thousand cigarettes are normally smoked here in a single night], heated bodies, coffee, chipped potatoes, pomade, moth-balls and raw spirits. At midnight, in time for an entertainment of dancing girls, there entered many couples drawn from that more fortunate section of London life which indulges in a wild round of pleasure, including the industrial aristocracy, minor Royalty, highly-paid entertainers, and sporting gentlemen. These sophisticates exhibited considerable enjoyment, for they regard the sight of young ladies with bared breasts and cunningly fashioned head-dresses as the highest peak of

divertissement: how much money they actually spent during their stay, however, I was not able to ascertain. There were also present several foreign gentlemen of Latin and Eastern aspect, who were eager to hire young ladies, especially provided by the management and evidently straight from school.

In these depraved surroundings the impoverished minor executives made a brave pretence at behaving as to the manner born. Some would engage a *hostess* tentatively in banter at the bar; but for the most part they seemed to regard these young ladies with a mixture of awe and embarrassment.

One typical party of three consumed between them, from midnight to a quarter to four, half a pint of onion soup, two bottles of superior champagne, two and a quarter pounds of steak with *foie gras*, thirteen whiskies with water, a sufficiency of chipped potatoes, an eighth of a white loaf, six ounces of tinned tomatoes, twelve mushrooms, a quarter of a pound of cheese, two ounces of butter, one ten-inch cigar, thirty-seven American cigarettes, half a pint of coffee, six tablets of acetylsalicylic acid, one brandy, and three square inches of marshmallow. They were treated with disdain by the waiters, and had become so unwell by the arrival of the second *cabaret* entertainment, that the rhythmical passage of a line of powdered and befeathered buttocks within an inch of their chins could produce in them no more than a tendency to turn green and dribble at the corner of the mouth.

When at last they were able to walk without holding on to strangers, they proceeded gloomily out into the chill of early morning, having left a tip of four pounds and paid a bill of which only half the amount would have procured for any one of them five pairs of good, sensible shoes.

The cruel nature of their misery may perhaps most easily be gauged by the recollection that their wives and children had very likely retired to bed that same evening after an anxious supper of tinned pilchards and Swiss roll.

ALEX ATKINSON

Next week: Two Street Boys

Hope

By CLAUD COCKBURN

IT does not take all sorts to make a world. This was the thought—a big one—which came to James Peter Aldridge in a dream he had early in December at his home in Leicester.

The thing seemed to him so pregnant with meaning and hope for the future that—shortly pre-dawn though the time was—he immediately telephoned to a man he knew (a fellow-citizen, in fact, of Leicester) to recount his experience.

The other man was, one must admit, peeved. He said "Why in heaven's name ring me up at this hour to tell me that? Of course I know it takes all sorts to make a world."

"I'm not telling you," said Aldridge, "that it takes all sorts to make a world. I'm telling you it doesn't. That's what

the voice said in my dream. Does *not*. *Now* d'you understand?"

Brought up on the notion that it does take all sorts to make a world, Aldridge had been, until the voice spoke to him in his dream, facing 1958 with the gloomy resignation wherewith he had faced every year since that terrible turning point, that moment of lost innocence, when, in those long-distant Christmas holidays, he had taken it for granted that everyone would see at once that his cousin and guest, Alfred Aldridge, was a thing not to be borne, something to be scrubbed out and tidied away.

They had replied "Oh well, it takes all sorts to make a world," and thereafter James Peter Aldridge had believed

it—assumed, in short, that if you wanted to have a world at all (which you not unnaturally did) you had to have Alfred (bigger and beastlier now) and that ghastly girl from Scarborough and Foster Dulles and the Pelham-Yeats family and that leering sneering type at the garage, and if you went on a trip to Germany and you saw a little man with a kind of Charlie Chaplin moustache and his hair dropping over his forehead addressing a mass meeting in favour of wiping people out, gassing them, torturing them and smashing them up with bombs, you would have to say "Never mind, it takes all sorts to make a world."

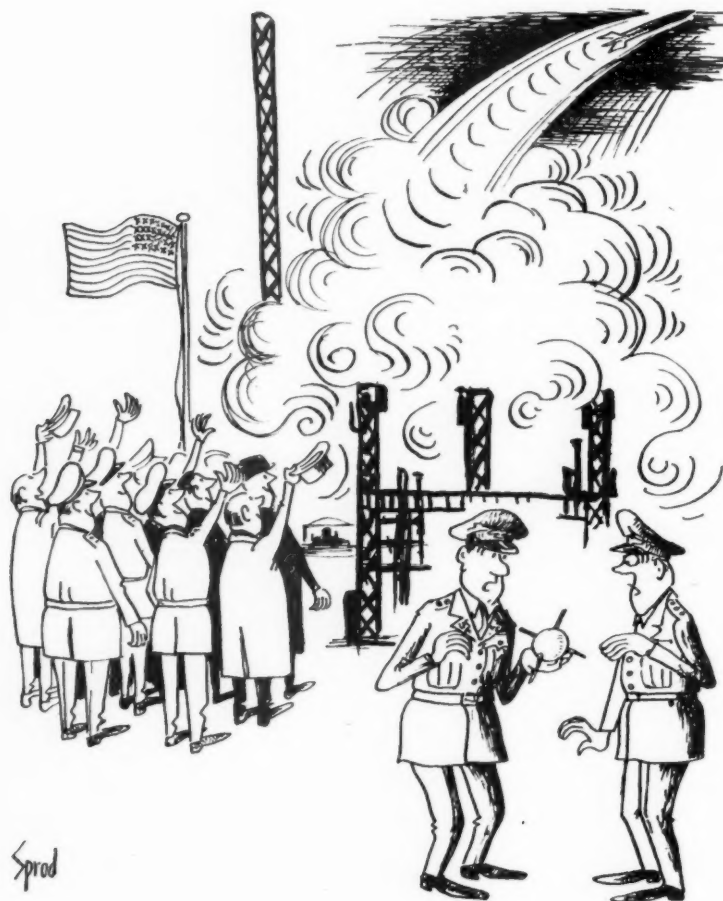
For a while Aldridge was so elated by the news given him in his dream that he thought he could probably get clear through 1958 on the strength of that one realization alone—the realization that you could have a world without any of that lot in it at all.

Then it occurred to him that just possibly there were other big, uplifting thoughts waiting to be tapped. By judicious use of tranquilizers and stimulants he induced the type of deep yet alert sleep he had been in that other time, and this time the voice said "The man doesn't have a right to his opinion. Not everyone has a right to his own opinion."

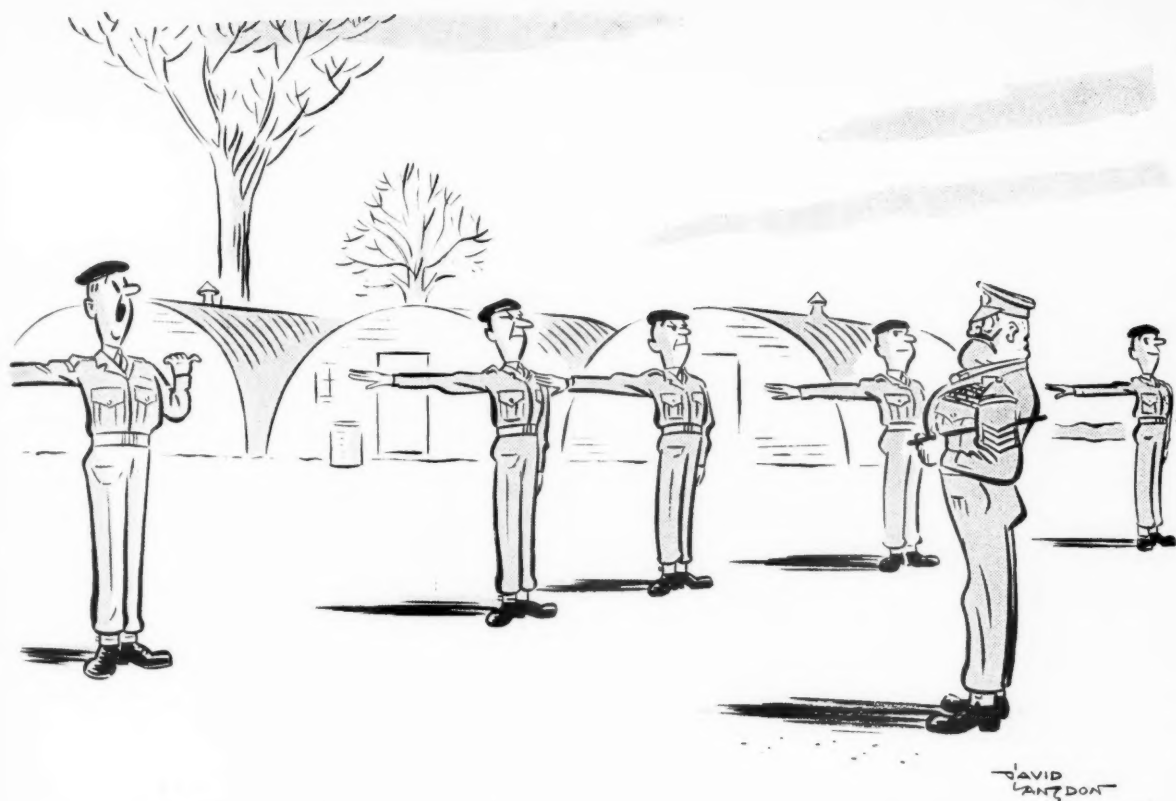
Aldridge was so excited that, forgetting the previous unpleasantness, he rang up the same fellow-citizen of Leicester whom he had told about all sorts being unnecessary for the making of a world and told him about the latest disclosure.

"Oh by George, great heavens above," responded the friend in a mingling of scream and snore, "are you forced to ring me up to tell me platitudes in the middle of the night? Of course every man's entitled to his opinion. I've known that since I was so high."

"But he isn't," yelled James, "damn this line, this is what happened before. I'm ringing you to tell you that every man is jolly well *not* entitled to his filthy little opinion. It's my New Year's present to you. Haven't you ever thought about the opinions some people have? Stupid, disgusting, erroneous in the highest degree? What, may I ask, 'entitles' them to hold such? Who said it was O.K. to have opinions like that?"



"Holy cow! The Satellite was in my pocket all the time."



"They're still filling in their 'What's Wrong with the Modern Army' forms, Sarge."

DAVID
LANGDON

Naming, with an ugly oath, a prominent member of the British Government, followed by references to three American senators and two men behind the men behind the Kremlin, Aldridge said "For the first time in my life I realize that I do not have to go through the looming year ahead considering that these people are in some way 'entitled' to their absurd and far from innocuous opinions. And in that general proposition I include the Pelham-Yeats, a ghastly girl I know from near Scarborough, and—put this down if you've a pencil handy—my cousin Alfred.

"And furthermore, old man," said Aldridge, "I propose, by a judicious use of tranquillizers and stimulants, to get on the spiritual blower to a number of other big thoughts which may make this coming year something really good."

"Could be," said the other man, who was half-heartedly trying to keep the corner of his pillow out of the receiving part of the telephone.

"For instance," Aldridge continued aggressively, "what the devil makes you think it never rains but it pours? I don't believe that's an ascertained fact at all, and next dream I can get I wouldn't be surprised if they didn't confirm that the whole thing's an old wives' kettle of fish or whatever it is.

"And about the lane," he shouted, sensing that he was losing the attention of his audience.

"What lane?" muttered the other.

"With no turning. Are they trying to

tell us—in which case their approach is merely facetious—that there always is a turning, or do they mean that here and there there are very long lanes with no turnings in them at all? I intend to get the facts about all this, and a lot more too. I'm damned if I'm not going to take a horse to the water and make him, absolutely *make* him drink. Bet it can be done."

"You're entitled," said the other before dropping the telephone from his limp hand, "to your opinion, old boy."

Leslie Henson

OH hadn't we the Gaiety . . . No more;
The curtain's down and mirth's foundations fled,
The pick-axe, not the player, holds the floor,
And he who often raised its roof is dead.

None ever spoke so clear without a word,
His face a book no prompter had to read,
A map of all the world of things absurd,
Except—of leering wink he had no need.

F. L. M.



How I Nearly Became a Magician

By ANTHONY CARSON

IN Paris, quite a fair time ago, when the Café de Flore had quiet, unpublicized blossoms and you could even drink at the Ritz Bar without being an American, all the districts of the city possessed their essential mood, personality and perfume. Opera singers congregated at a café near the Madeleine, safe-breakers had their special bar in Montmartre, and bicyclists bragged in the Sports at Ménilmontant. It might take time, it might be by sheer accident, but one day you would find your niche. Then, again, you could change your personality by moving swiftly and silently from one district to another, inscrutable at Père Lachaise, bawdy near St. Lazare, saintly at Sacré Cœur. Quite by accident, terribly in love and looking for a girl called Lizette, I fell into the quarter of Black Magic at a café called L'Aurore near St. Sulpice.

I walked into the café, sat down at a table and ordered a brandy. After a time I became aware of eyes looking at me, and if I turned away I could still feel them boring into my head. It was an uncomfortable feeling and I buried my face in my brandy. Then I looked up and saw a figure standing over my table. At first I noticed only his eyes,

they were like the eyes of owls, of wolves, mad priests or drug-addicts. "May I sit down?" he said in a sort of French which was not quite French. Actually, apart from the eyes, he was rather short, normal and insignificant. "Certainly," I said. "I am interested in people," he said, "and there is something strange behind you." "Behind me?" I said, alarmed. "Certainly," he said, "a thing. A force. An aura. It has an astonishing colour. Let me tell you. You are an Englishman with German ancestry, you are an unsuccessful writer, you have no money and you are hopelessly in love with a girl called Lizette." "How do you know?" I asked, very perturbed. "I have means of knowing," he said, "although I have never heard of you before. We could be useful to each other. You have unused capabilities. A very small part of life exists on the surface. Come and meet my friends." I am easily led and followed him over to another table.

There were three men sitting there, and each one of them had the same sort of disturbing eyes as my host. Their light seemed to have nothing to do with the sun. Even the old waiter who took our orders was moving in an obvious

trance. The most sinister of the trio was introduced to me as a count and I noticed that he kept looking at my hands. "He has good strong hands," he kept saying. "He is in love," said my host, and they all laughed with a sort of hollow relish. "We must help him," continued my host. "If he will help us," said the Count, picking up one of my hands and staring at it. When he looked up at me I noticed he had a face with a slightly greenish pallor, but I put that down to the bar lighting. Paris can be a very imaginative place.

Later on my new friend took me to lunch at a nearby restaurant. In these surroundings he seemed quite ordinary and I felt relieved. I ate my steak and fried potatoes, thinking hard about Lizette. "Stop thinking about that worthless girl," said my friend. "There are more important things to resolve. What did you think of my friends?" I said that the Count gave me the uncomfortable impression of being a sort of corpse. "He did actually die," said my friend casually, "in a manner of speaking. But he is a very useful and hard-working man. Indispensable to the organization."

I met my new friend quite a lot after



Eric Burgin

that. Once you leave your district in Paris you are in another world and the paint and poems and manifestations of St. Germain-des-Prés are all forgotten—all but Lizette. My friend's name was Boris and he was a Russian. He lived in quite a nice hotel off the Etoile, and had a piano in his room which he played frequently and extremely well. He played only Liszt. "Nobody realizes the importance of Liszt," he said; and indeed while he played the musical phrases and frenzies became quite hypnotic. Between performances he explained about the Black Force, or was visited by police officials. During this time I went into the hall, and it was only later that I realized he was an informer.

"The Force is employed everywhere," he explained to me on one occasion. "In Germany to a vast extent; in England less so because the English have no sexual depth; but most of all in Paris. Paris is the centre of the Force." "What is the Force?" I asked. "It's channelled," said Boris; "it originates in varieties of manifestations, such as enormously emotional public gatherings like the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior or church services." "But how is it channelled?" I asked him. "People are stationed at the vantage points, in upstairs rooms. Transmitters, as they are called. They

absorb the energy and relay it to where it is required. The Count is one of the best transmitters in Paris. State funerals." I looked at him in amazement. He was speaking so casually he might have been discussing the Stock Exchange. "But where is it required?" I asked. "Anywhere. Everywhere," he said. "Politics. Finance. Power Groups. So called Popular manifestations. Revolutions. Even the Arts." "The Arts?" I said. "Yes, certainly—the Académie Française, the Prix Goncourt, and so on."

The next day, seeing my interest in the Force, he took me for a walk through parts of Paris. He had equipped himself with a map and indicated to me the areas through which the Force flowed or concentrated itself. It appeared that certain geographical features either hindered or encouraged the flow, particularly the river. We entered various churches and Boris explained certain magnetic factors. "A bishop is best," he said. "The architecture also helps enormously." Our last church was St. Sulpice. "The most satisfactory of all," said Boris, and we found ourselves back in the café. All the group were there, including the Count. "Are you interested?" he asked me. "I can't help being interested," I said. "Then you might be able to help

us. A certain amount of training and so on..." "I don't know," I said. I was thinking of Lizette. If there really was a Force it might help me to get her back. The Count gave a grating laugh. He had read my thoughts. "You'll never see her again," he said. But Boris looked suddenly into my eyes with an extraordinary brilliance. "You will meet Lizette in the Café des Fleurs, Rue de Grenouille, at eight o'clock this evening. This is good-bye. You are not serious enough." In a mixed state of mind I left the café and walked into the street.

I arrived at the café at a quarter to eight and waited. Of course it was ridiculous to take the Force so seriously, but any possibility, however far-fetched, was better than nothing. By eight o'clock there was no sign of her. There was another girl at the next table and she seemed to be crying. At half-past eight there was still no sign. So much for the Force, I thought. At nine o'clock I got up to go and accidentally knocked over a glass on the table of the girl next to me. "I'm terribly sorry," I said. "You're not more sorry than I am," she said miserably. "Can I help?" I said. She was really very attractive. We talked for about ten minutes and I asked her her name. "My name?" she said. "Oh, it's Lizette."

America Day by Day

By P. G. WODEHOUSE

TO thinking men like myself it has always seemed strange that while millions of dollars are spent on sprays and drenches and oil each year in an effort to make mosquitoes scratch their heads and ask themselves if it is worth while carrying on, nothing has been done to discourage a far worse American pest, the St. Vitus Dance patient who cannot stay put at his own table in a restaurant for six consecutive seconds but must always be off and away, buzzing into the ears of occupants of other tables.

"There's no way of carrying on a normal conversation with these guys," says Frank Sinatra, explaining why he now takes all his meals alone. "Their heads keep bobbing and their eyes dart from side to side as they check every celebrity making an entrance or exit. With no warning they will suddenly catapult away from the table and leave you sitting alone like the 'before' fellow in the ad for deodorant creams. You might as well lunch with a pogo stick."

It is pleasant to see that at last some sort of a move is being made. The Stork Club now places cards before each patron, which read:

"There will be a cover charge of \$3.50 for table-hopping."

This should help, provided the table-hopper is the host and is going to pay the bill, but table-hoppers as a class are nearly always guests and worry but little over cover charges. The idea of attaching them to their seats with a short chain is being considered.

Depressing news for those with the future of the penny whistle—or, as it is more properly called, the fiddle flute—at heart comes from Mr. Art Buchwald, the roving reporter of the *New York Herald-Tribune*, who has been interviewing Mr. Leslie Lieber, the only man who can play two fiddle flutes at the same time. (Not that he ever does this in public. He says he does not want to prostitute the instrument.)

A mere five thousand fiddle flutes, it seems, are now sold annually in the United States, which means, if I have got my figures correctly, that out of a population of 167,500,000 potential fiddle fluters 167,495,000 are playing the harmonica.

"I don't know how it happened," said Mr. Lieber, "but somewhere along the line the fiddle flute fell into disrepute. If we only knew where we fell down," he added with a sigh.

Several reasons suggest themselves. Mr. Petrillo, the head of the Musicians Union, while accepting the harmonica, stoutly refuses to recognize the fiddle flute as a musical instrument, which naturally gives those addicted to it a social black eye. Then again, there is no money in fluting the fiddle. You cannot make a living at it. And, above all, it is a heartbreakingly lonely business. As the fellow said, harmonick and the world harmonicks with you. Fiddle, and you fiddle alone.

But there is just a hint of a silver lining in the clouds.

"One must always remember," says Mr. Lieber, "that people have no expectations when they see someone bring out a penny whistle. Anything you do with it is gravy."

Quite a bit of excitement lately on television. They have now got a variant on the \$64,000 Question called the \$64,000 Challenge. It works as follows. Chap goes into booth, and Master of Ceremonies asks him questions. Another chap, the challenger, is cooped up in another booth. Every time first chap answers a question, the words "Right" or "Wrong" are flashed on the front of his booth. This, of course, though seen by everybody else, is invisible to the second chap, the challenger. The questions concluded, the party of the second part is asked whether he accepts or challenges. If all the answers have been correct and he accepts, fine. But if they are correct and he challenges, bang goes his \$32,000 or \$64,000 or whatever it may be.

Well, there exists in these parts a Miss Joyce Brothers who has an

uncanny knowledge of boxing, having apparently spent all her formative years sitting in a ringside seat or curled up with Pierce Egan's *History of the Ring*, and the other night they assembled seven prominent pugilists to challenge her, and—rashly, as it turned out—the seven made Tommy Loughran, the former light-heavyweight champion, their spokesman, he being in their opinion the brains of the outfit. (The others, like Tony Galento, the gladiator who first spoke those immortal words "I'll moider dat bum," and Tiger Jones, the eminent middleweight, were men of action rather than intellect.)

"Right" followed "Right" monotonously, then the final question.

"And now, for sixty-four thousand dollars," boomed the Master of Ceremonies, "the fight between Archie Moore and Bobo Olsen. How did it end? In which round? Who won?"

Miss Brothers nearly yawned. To a girl who can tell you what happened when the Bermondsey Bruiser met the Chislehurst Chicken in 1806 this was pretty elementary stuff. She replied, with perfect justice, that Archie Moore hung a beaut on his co-worker's jaw in the third round, laying the latter out as flat as a Dover sole.

The M.C. turned to Tommy Loughran.

"Do you accept or challenge?"

"I accept," said Mr. Loughran, and his six cronies, who had seen all those "Rights," breathed six sighs of relief and broke into six broad smiles.

They have not smiled since, for Mr. Loughran had not said his say.

"Except," he went on, "for the final question. It was not the third round, it was the fourth."

One wonders what the others, Mr. Galento particularly, said to him on the way home, and what he said to them. There would, one feels, have been some gentle rebukes, with Mr. Galento pointing out to him that Miss Brothers, like the customer, is always right and that anyone but a—here, no doubt, he gave a crisp word-portrait of Mr. Loughran—would have known it. As to what Mr. Loughran said, what *does* one say in such circumstances? "Tennis, anyone?" I suppose, or something like that.



Army Catering Corps

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Humane Meet for Christmas Week

A HAPPY AND ILLEGAL CHRISTMAS

By Geoffrey Humphrys

IT is easier to get into trouble on Christmas Day in Britain than on any other day of the year. At least, it ought to be, if all the laws on the Statute Book were strictly enforced.

The giving and receiving of presents can be an offence in certain circumstances. At one time large firms gave special Christmas bonuses to customers who traded with them throughout the year. This led to so much corruption that in 1906 an Act for the Better Prevention of Corruption was passed. Under its terms "any person who gives or agrees to give or accepts any gift" is an offender, so that both representatives who give and customers who accept presents are contravening the Act.

Law-abiding citizens will be well advised to abandon any idea of driving to church on Christmas morning. According to the Holy Days and Fasting Days Act, 1551, every Christian is obliged to attend a church service on "the Nativitie of our Lorde," but he must walk there and back. The police have the power to confiscate and sell any privately owned vehicles used for Christmas Day church-going. They can also alter the route or method of driving of any vehicle "in the neighbourhood of places of worship during the hours of divine service on Christmas Day."

Even your Christmas dinner can be full of pitfalls, if the letter of the law is enforced with full rigour. The enactments of Cromwell's Long Parliament never officially repealed, should not lightly be disregarded. It is illegal, even in your own home, to eat more than three courses at your festive table. Most of the traditional Christmas fare comes under the legal veto. There is a law that no person shall be concerned with the making or consuming of mince pies on Christmas Day. And the same law adds that those making or eating plum pudding are liable to a heavy fine, plus imprisonment. Both of these dishes are described as "abominable and idolatrous things to be avoided by Christians."

There are numerous restrictions on the purchase of foodstuffs on Christmas Day, which should be carefully borne in mind. Bananas cannot be legally bought after eight o'clock in the evening, but you can buy figs with impunity. The same time-limit is imposed for the sale of unpeeled potatoes, but after eight p.m. chipped potatoes can be purchased legally. Raw meat is out, whereas cooked meats are permissible. You can buy monkey nuts or chestnuts on Christmas night, but not oranges or any other fruit, except, of course, figs. Finally, on the subject of food, it is illegal to "eat chocolates or other sweetmeats" in any public conveyance on Christmas Day.

Sportsmen who insist on the enjoyment of their games and pastimes on Christmas Day are in peril of worse than indigestion. Most away matches

played on Christmas Day are illegal, for in 1625 a law was passed stating that "there shall be no meeting assemblings or concourse of people out of their owne parishes for any sporte or pastimes whatsoever." The Unlawful Games Act of 1541 allows only archery to be practised anywhere, but subsequent laws made leaping and vaulting permissible.

The only legitimate use of a gun on Christmas Day is in self-defence or in defence of the realm. This includes a sporting gun, for according to an Act passed by William IV in 1831, "no person whatsoever shall kill or take any game or use any dog, gun, net or other engine or instrument for the purpose of killing or taking game on Christmas Day." For the purpose of this Act game is considered to be "hare, pheasant, partridge, grouse, heath or moor game, black game and bustards."

All forms of acting are, it need hardly be said, forbidden. The amount of crime, in the form of charades, that goes on at Christmas parties is difficult to compute, but it is safe to say that should the police decide to take action there would be many sensational arrests.

Holly takes a long time to mature, so the authorities have taken certain precautions to preserve it. It is a punishable offence when out walking on Christmas Day to cut holly from a bush or tree. Another law not likely to cause hardship to many makes it illegal to fix berries on unberried holly branches and sell them as natural branches.

You cannot press for any payment of time-limit debts on Christmas Day, as a Victorian law of 1882 states that Christmas Day "is not computed as a day if it be the last one." Nor, if you are hard up, may you start "popping" your illegal Christmas presents, for it is illegal for pawnbrokers in England to carry on their business on Christmas Day. Beware, however, of letting your distress at this predicament drive you to extremes; burials on Christmas Day are also against the law. There is a happier alternative if you are pressed for cash—go to Scotland. The Act of 1872 that, in section 32, forbids English pawnbroking legalizes it in Scotland under section 56.

It begins to appear that Christmas Day, as we know and enjoy it, continues to exist only because of the forbearance of the police and their readiness to wink at contraventions, often flagrant, of the law of the land. There is, however, one small but important safeguard. If some conscientious policeman did, in fact, arrest an offender on any of these charges, he would presumably himself be instantly subject to arrest for working at his normal occupation on Christmas Day. The chances of a Happy and Illegal Christmas in 1957 are, therefore, good.

1 Chas. I
c. 1

33 Henry VIII
c. 9

1/2 Wm. IV
c. 32 s. 3

45 6 Vict.
c. 50

43 44 Vict.
c. 41 ss. 3
(1880)

35 6 Vict.
c. 93

29 Chas. II
c. 7

6 Edw. VII
c. 34

5/6 Edw. VI
c. 1

10/11 Vict.
c. 89 s. 22
(1847)

CHRISTMAS IS DIFFERENT DOWN UNDER

By A. H. Barton

THE tram rattled up the Dandenong Road on Boxing Day.

The Englishwoman, high discontent in her voice, spoke to her neighbour: "It's all so different," she said. "Even Christmas is different." Sitting behind her, I huddled into my *Melbourne Argus*. "The vegetables are different," she said, "unhandy cabbages a yard across, and potato famines. For a month I lived on a bag of potatoes smuggled in from Tasmania by the Navy. By the Navy. And the birds"—she shuddered—"there are queer birds about, not like the birds we get in England. The fish may have the same names but they're different fish. They've got what they call whiting on their slabs, but it's green." I saw her long nose quiver as she turned to her neighbour to make the point. "A kind of pale green." Her voice carried well and I fought down an urge to lean forward and deliver an impertinent lecture on peace, Commonwealth relations and goodwill. I concentrated instead on this point about Christmas. Everything else might be different, but surely not Christmas.

The trams are certainly different. In Brisbane the trams were all silver, trams of the moon, the drivers and conductors wearing silver kepis; here in Melbourne they are long low green sports trams, with a startling acceleration. And nowhere in England has it ever been possible to win, with a lucky tram ticket, ten shillings from the sponsors of a radio show.

The sky is different. It is higher, and instead of the Plough there is the Southern Cross. This cross is in the sky and on the flag, and it is mentioned in the jingle sung late at night with variations, irony, unanalysed exuberance and deadpan sentiment:

*Beneath the Southern Cross we stand
United in our common motherland
Whacko Bluey.*

The earth is different. Instead of patches of black earth intersected by railway lines, by-passes and runways, and dotted with the stumps of decaying brussels sprouts, there are limitless

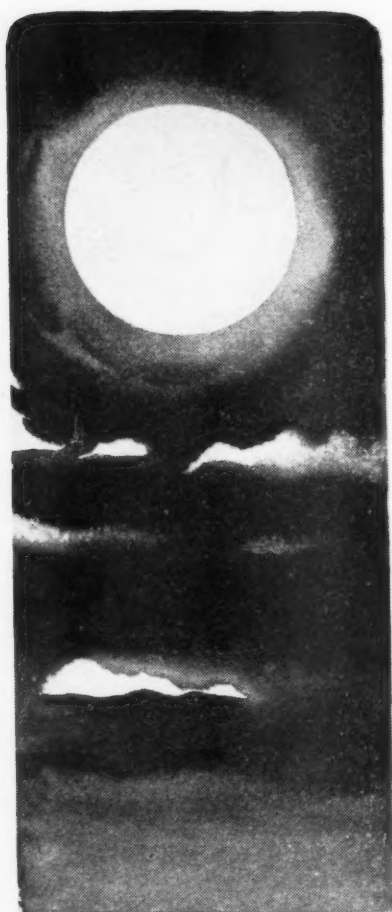
stretches of red earth, intersected only by emu-proof fences, and dotted only with dead eucalyptus trees, their pale trunks smooth to the touch.

The sea is different also, being warm enough to bathe in.

The women are not the same: they dress better, starting earlier in the day. A Melbourne woman, setting out for Prahran Market after breakfast, dresses as though her true love sold the carrots there. And this does not mean that she has nothing in reserve for later in the day, that she has shot her bolt by a quarter to ten in the morning. Those who say so are liars and can be proved such by reference to the articles which appeared in this country in *Women Only*, *The Hearth Graceful* and *Her* at the time of the Queen's visit to Australia; and which were followed up by Esther Spangle's homely travel book, *Down Under with My Polka-dotted Duster*, and by the antipodean chapter in Hilarity Labrador's more cultured *Poise is what You Make It*. What these lovely feminine people expected Australian women to wear I do not know—cotton missionary dresses, perhaps—but their common conclusion was, their dears, that they felt shabby, markedly shabby, all the time they were down there.

The men are quite different. I remember sitting down at my desk in Melbourne for the first time. For thirty days I had rested in an ocean liner, eating, sleeping, swimming, playing deck-hockey and not reading *War and Peace*. Sleet had been falling into the soot of Tilbury when my ship left; this morning in Melbourne I had eaten paw-paw for breakfast on a veranda. My eyes were clear, my stomach flat, my step firm. My Australian colleague greeted me. "What's the matter with you, cobber?" he asked. "On the grog last night? Sore throat? What is it?"

I looked up startled. The Australian, tall as a house, brown as a polished boot, gazed at me with friendly concern in his limpid eyes. I rose and went to a mirror. I looked. From a waistcoat pocket I took a small tin. "I feel fine, thank you," I said and swallowed a





tablet. "I may not look fit," I said defensively, "but my friends tell me I'm wiry." I had seen the difference.

But Christmas is certainly the same. After breakfast the Christmas cards arrive from all around Australia: robins in the snow; coaches halting before the inn with its red Cellophane windows; Father Christmas hitching his reindeer to a chimney in a blizzard. After the Christmas cards, matins:

*In the bleak mid-winter,
Frosty wind made moan . . .*

And after matins there is the Christmas tree. Jack Frost is on the top. The little glass icicles sparkle and the artificial frost glistens in the coloured lights. On the labels of the presents there are holly leaves, holly berries and robins again—and when I mention robins I do not mean the yellow-breasted shrike-robin (*Eopsaltria Australis*); I mean the robin redbreast, a bird that has never seen Australia.

It should not be supposed that the tree itself is an un-English gum-tree, its pale pointed leaves smelling of eucalyptus. If there is a difference about the tree it is only in the source of its supply. You do not buy your tree from the man who stole it from the company director's quick-money crop just off the Guildford by-pass; in Victoria the supply is nationalized, and you buy it for five shillings from a Forestry Department stock laid out on the roof of a shed in the city. But the tree itself, grown in the Grampians

not far from Horsham, is an orthodox pine-top.

And when the presents have all been opened there is Christmas dinner: sherry, soup, roast turkey, burgundy, roast potatoes, bread sauce, plum pudding in brandy, nuts, cheese, grapes, liqueur chocolates, coffee, and port. After dinner, there is sleep; after sleep, the nightmare test of Christmas cake; after tea, among

the trampled plastic earth-satellites, the coloured wrappings and the half-completed lists of who-gave-who, there is the gathering tension of approaching children's bed-time; and after bed-time the dark and merciful whisky. Christmas, at least, is the same.

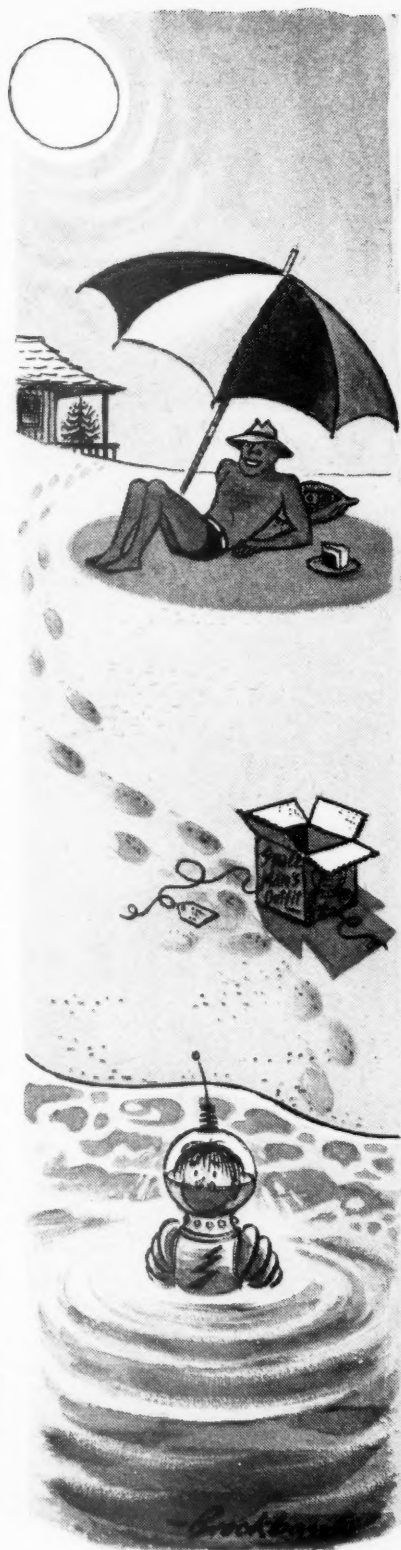
The voice of the woman in front intervened. "You see," she was complaining, "it doesn't seem right to me that Christmas should be summery."

There was that of course. The weather did make a difference. To go to early service I had worn dark glasses. To look at Christmas cards, of village churches in the snow, I had sat on the lawn. Propped in the children's sand-pit, under the hot sun, the tree had indeed looked out of place. One hundred degrees in the shade was perhaps a little warm for soup, turkey, plum pudding, cheese, chocolate, burgundy, brandy and port. It was certainly odd to eat Christmas cake on a beach, in bathing shorts, one's head in the shade of a casuarina tree; and to wash it down with cups of tea, cleaned with a gum-leaf and made in a billy on an open fire.

Well then, I thought with satisfaction, Christmas is different also. Everything is different. I leaned forward. "If it's so different that you dislike it, madam," I said with vehemence, "would you not do better to go home?"

She turned, surprised and puzzled. "Go home?" she said. "Go home to England when I can live *here*?"

I felt sad. I like England.





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Listening to that "Christmas Round the World" programme —



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after lunch on Christmas Day —



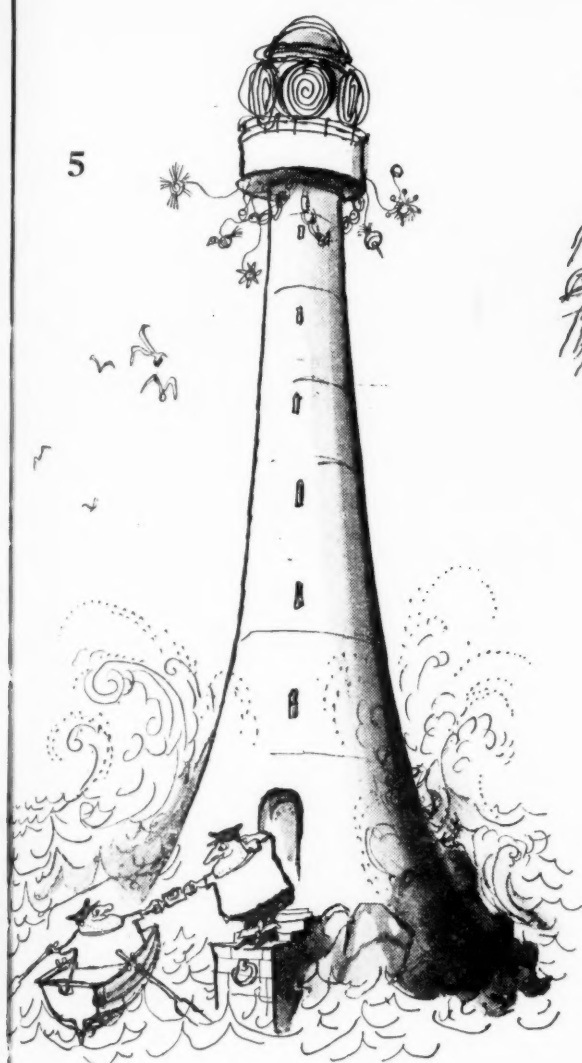
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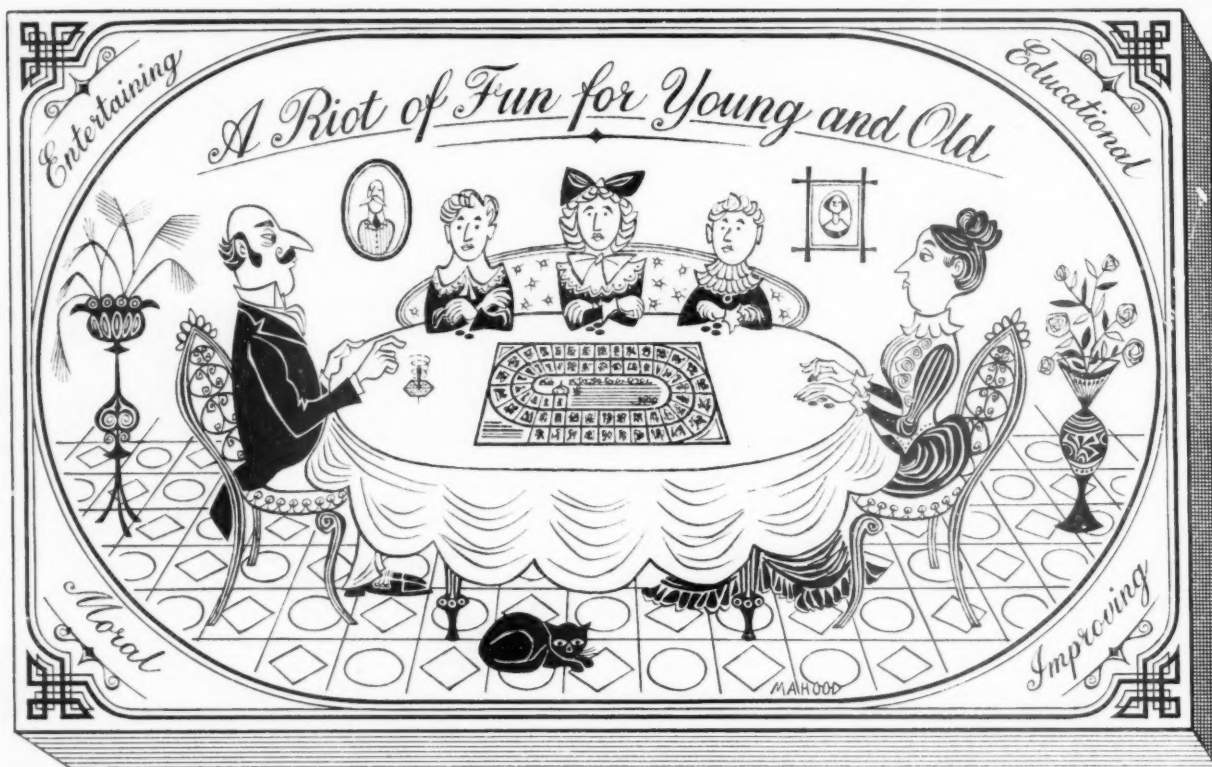


unexciting —



Ronald Searle

our own Christmas is.



TRAGIC AUTHOR WINS ALL

By E. S. Turner

THE old-fashioned parent who sets out to buy a table game warranted both to elevate and amuse must not expect instant success.

What is he offered? For a start there is that hardy perennial in which the object is to amass the greatest number of houses, hotels and public utilities, with a view to rack-renting all comers and driving them into deeper mortgage. Another much-recommended game invites its players to double their savings on the Stock Exchange, either by reckless gambling in one commodity or by a judicious spread-over of investments.

A third offers initiation into the excitements of the Fleet Street ulcer-land, with bankruptcy ever looming. The instructions to a fourth all-too-familiar game begin: "The object . . . is to smuggle contraband through the Customs, by avoiding payment of duty on articles of luggage . . ." It is a game in which informers prosper, the diplomatic bag is lightheartedly abused and "the winner is the player with the most money at the end of the game."

Hesitantly, the parent explains that

these games are not quite what he had in mind. "Haven't you something a bit more—well, I hardly like to say it, but *improving*?" Flinching at the dirty word, the débutante behind the counter replies: "Nobody has ever asked for anything like *that*!"

The customer then settles for a new game called "Big Game Hunt on Venus," hoping that the moral values in Space are superior to those on Earth.

Some day, perhaps, the pendulum will swing back and there will be more of a demand for games which, while offering the young a useful tip or two for the rat-race ahead, are not wholly devoted to the pursuit of money and power. Our forbears kept a sterner watch on these things. To them the table game was a much-esteemed device for grounding the child in virtuous precepts; in later life he could be relied upon to learn for himself, as his elders had done, how to adapt these precepts to the arts of profit and monopoly.

Consider "The Game of Human Life," which was all the rage at pious

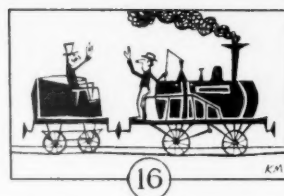
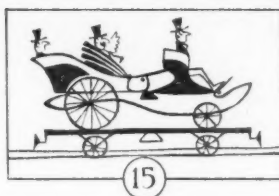
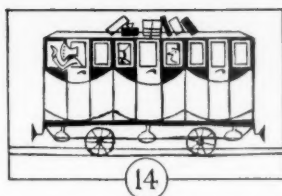
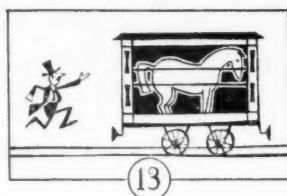
firesides on Christmas Day, 1790. The publisher, John Wallis, explained that, in order "to avoid introducing a dice-box into private families," the game was to be played with a more seemly device, viz., a teetotum. Along the road to be traversed by the players were scenes depicting Virtue and Vice. It was Mr. Wallis's earnest wish that parents should call the attention of the players "to a few moral and judicious observations explanatory of each Character as they proceed, and contrast the happiness of a Virtuous and well-spent life with the fatal consequences arising from Vicious and Immoral pursuits."

The type of hazard encountered may be judged by these excerpts from the rules:

The Prodigal at No. 30 shall pay four stakes and go back to the Careless Boy at 6.

The Married Man at 34 shall receive two stakes for his wife's portion and go to be a Good Father, at 56.

Mr. Wallis was much concerned to



discourage the young from a life of idle scribbling. As witness:

The Romance Writer at 40 shall pay two stakes and go back to the Mischievous Boy at 5.

The Dramatist at 44 shall pay four stakes to the Masters of his art and shall begin the game again.

The Satyrist at 77 shall pay four stakes and go back to the Malignant Boy at 8.

This might suggest that Mr. Wallis was opposed to all forms of literary endeavour. Far from it:

The Tragic Author at 45 shall go to the place of the Immortal Man at 84 and win the game.

We do not know who Mr. John Wallis was, and must therefore be excused for suspecting that he was, or had sought to be, a Tragic Author.

Designed on a similar plan was a game called "The Mansion of Happiness" (c. 1800). It bore the sub-title "Virtue Rewarded and Vice Punished," and was dedicated to that old soldier's wife, Her Royal Highness the Duchess of York. In this game the parent who took upon himself to offer a few moral and judicious observations on the characters portrayed had a nasty trip-wire waiting for him. Decorating the square labelled "Immodesty" was a sullen female who had just emerged from a dubious-looking pavilion and whose dress was

slashed in such a way as to show one leg up to the knee. She had the expression of one who is being unfairly picked on, and no wonder, for just along the road a nymph resting on a rock with both breasts bare and showing as much leg as a girl on a bookmaker's calendar was said to represent "Chastity." Even the Duchess of York, on a closer examination of the game, must have felt that Chastity was stretching her luck.

The designer of "The Way to Heaven" (undated) avoided any illustrative ambiguities, contenting himself with a bald listing of virtues and vices. Attention to prayers and avoiding bad company were worth five points each; good behaviour in church and childlike simplicity, 9; honesty, visiting the sick, and instructing the ignorant, 10; respect for superiors, 11; temperance and industry, 14; brotherly love, 19; and forgiveness of injuries, 23. The points deducted for various vices included: pride, 8; impatience, 10; too fond of dress, wishing to be praised, selfishness, 12; peevishness, 15; gluttony, 18; vanity, 24; telling lies to injure, 42. For tepidity the penalty was to miss one turn; for obstinacy in sin, to miss two turns. Resignation was considered a virtue, and worth six points. Oddly, while charity to the poor yielded 18 points, hard-heartedness to the poor cost only 10. Square No. 76 (14 from the end) was inscribed: "Purgatory: stop four turns, then go to Heaven."

There were numerous table games

which, besides being highly moral, were highly didactic. A somewhat intimidating example was "The Imperial Game of Arithmetical Chances" (1822), the inventor of which flattered himself that "nothing in it whatever can be objected to by the most rigid parent or guardian." In his address to parents he said:

"It has ever been considered a desideratum in the education of youth that the mode of inculcating learning should partake as much of the nature of amusement as the most ingenious contrivance might render possible." Here is his idea of ingenious contrivance:

"After each player has had his first chance, then Red to spin again, and if the number he spins, when multiplied by any of the general multipliers hereafter mentioned, equalizes the number his marker is then upon, he is to add the number he multiplied by the number he spins, and go forward so many points; but should the number his marker is upon not admit of equalization by such multiplication, then he is to proceed according to Rule Six."

There were bonuses for qualities like Industry, Hope and Friendship. A player achieving Fame was to receive five counters from the pool "to prove that there is sometimes more solid advantage attached to it than the mere name." If he attained Dignity (which was declared to be the sum of Industry, Friendship, Fame and Fortune) he was to receive six counters "and to behave with such propriety as to prove that the honour is not unworthily

Generosity. A Robber.



Chastity. Immodesty.



Sobriety. A Drunkard.



bestowed." A descent on Fortune's Lap entitled a player to receive six counters from the pool, plus one from each player, but he was "by no means to exult over his less fortunate competitors."

Another arithmetical game (1798) was on a less lofty moral plane. At various points the players were required to recite tables, including those of the ale measure and the wine measure. Failure to repeat the wine-measure table carried a heavier penalty than failure to repeat the dry-measure table.

More popular than the arithmetical games, perhaps, were the geographical. The doyen of them was "A Journey Through Europe" (1759). A player was rewarded by two turns at the teetotum whenever he landed in a country with a king; and at that time there seem to have been kings (or their imperial equivalents) at Copenhagen, Stockholm, St. Petersburg, Warsaw, Berlin, Vienna, Constantinople, Naples, Turin, Madrid, Lisbon, Paris, and London. At Revel the traveller missed a turn to watch the Russians building men-of-war for the Baltic. In Siberia (near the Hyperborean Mountains) he missed another turn to gape at the State prisoners, and lost yet another turn at Voronets where he watched the Russians building men-of-war for the Black Sea. The greatest hazard was encountered on reaching Italy: "He who rests at 48 at Rome for kissing the Pope's toe shall be banished for his folly to No. 4 in the cold island of Iceland and miss three turns." A player who leap-frogged Rome, who avoided capture by the French at Minorca and eluded the Sallee Rovers would probably find himself delayed watching the French building men-of-war at Toulon and Brest, and the Spanish doing the same at Ferrol (the Sallee Rovers seem to have had nothing worth while on the stocks that year). The winner was the first player to reach London, kiss the King of England's hand and receive a knighthood.

Instruction in good behaviour was not overlooked in the games of the railway age. In "Rail-Road Adventures" (c. 1845) the admonitions included:

Smoking not allowed! You saw the rules posted up and have thought proper to break them; therefore you must pay for your cigar and much good may it do you!

Intoxicated! Who do you think will travel with you in such a state? You are fined five of the pool besides one to each player.

The hapless traveller had his hat blown off, saw livestock mangled on the track, was beset by floods and snow-drifts, and even watched the train move off carrying his bride (who by this time must have begun to wish she had married someone else).

A note in the book of instructions said that, if the game was played for money, "the winner will

have the privilege of contributing the money to any Benevolent or Charitable object which shall be recommended by the lady of the house."

Of ingenious but not necessarily moral war-games there has never been any scarcity. Many a time was Napoleon diced to destruction. In 1865 appeared "The New Game of Imperial Contest," in which the English, French, Turks and Sardinians were required to contain the Czar in his own territory. Though well commended by the games reviewers of *The Spectator*, *The Illustrated London News* and *The Sunday Times*, it lacked the inspirational touch to be found in, say, "With Our Bobs to Pretoria," the instructions to which said: "At the distribution of the pool it is requested to sing *God Save the Queen*."

King Edward's reign produced an "original and interesting" game called "Suffragette," described as a contest between suffragettes and police. The object of the suffragettes, it was explained, was "to pass through the lines of the police and to effect an entry into the House of Commons, and while

doing so to prevent the police from entering the Albert Hall [scene of a suffragette protest meeting]." The player who first infiltrated six of his counters into forbidden territory was the winner. Leaders of suffragettes and inspectors of police were entitled to jump in any direction, but ordinary suffragettes and policemen could move only obliquely (there are still policemen like that around). Suffragettes when arrested were gaoled, and policemen when disabled went to hospital. If prisons and hospitals became overcrowded, limited exchanges could be effected.

Another game based on the suffragette theme was called "Holloway." When a player obtained a full clutch of suffragettes he was required to call out, "Pank! Pank! Pank!"

Whether you considered "Suffragette" and "Holloway" to be moral and improving games depended on how you felt about votes for women. Contemporary with them was "Quack, Quack," which had in it all the seeds of the cut-throat commercial games of to-day. Its purpose was to teach the

art and mystery of poultry farming. A player could sell his eggs only according to the price laid down for the month, or more cheaply if he held a preserving jar. He might, in certain circumstances, convert them into chicks, but nothing could be done without a food card and he faced ruin if he received a card reading "Eggs All Bad" or "Dead Hen." Again, he might have to drop everything at short notice in order to chase his ducks back into their pond.

"Quack, Quack" was too harassing for the average adult, though children were probably able to rise to its demands. An easier game for parents was "Parliament," a pleasantly futile affair in which the members of one Cabinet had to be ousted by the members of another. No one could move until the respective ministers of militia and defence were taken from the board. There seems to be a moral there somewhere.





"I think they're trying to tell us something."



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Post-Scrooge Christmas at Cratchit's

By ANTHONY POWELL

BOB CRATCHIT removed five or six large sprigs of mistletoe and an enormous bunch of holly covered with red berries from the armchair to make room for his own person there; and he put up his feet on a crate of cherry brandy. A jug of negus stood beside him on the table from which he poured out a tumbler, drinking it off at a gulp. Then he began fumbling in his coat-tails for a wad of invoices as thick as a doormat, and started to check these over (as he might once have expressed himself) "like one o'clock." He had put on weight and his breath was shorter: no longer in the fine physical condition that used to enable him in the old days to go with the boys twenty or thirty times down the slide on Cornhill, and then run all the way home to Camden Town to play blind man's buff. Mrs. Cratchit, dressed in the height of the fashion, was examining her new lace bonnet in the glass.

"But every Christmas, Robert?" she said. "Must he come *every* Christmas? It is so tiring."

"Difficult to prevent," said her better half gloomily, "especially now that I am a partner. I feel just as you do about him, my dear, but one must observe certain civilities where business is concerned—especially within one's own office."

"I don't believe you ought ever to have gone on the board."

"There I agree," said Bob Cratchit. "What's more, I haven't told you yet what his special Christmas present to me is going to be this year."

"More Scrooge & Marley debentures, I suppose. We shall get loaded up with that 1½ per cent stock. We'd be better in Consols."

"He wants to change the name of the firm."

"What on earth—"

"Cratchit & Co., he is going to call it. He has already given orders for the old name to be painted out. I've explained a thousand times that we are only a small firm and can't afford to go playing about with good-will. We've traded for years as Scrooge & Marley. The name is good on 'Change for anything we care to put our hand to. You'd have thought that sentiment might have played a part. Not a bit of it! 'The

sooner Marley and his methods are forgotten the better,' he said. I told him it was all very well to talk like that, and of course I was flattered, but we had to balance the books."

Bob Cratchit gave a groan and poured himself out another glass of negus.

"I'm not feeling up to much to-day," he said. "I believe it is because that office of mine is kept far too hot. Place is like a furnace sometimes. I daren't say a word because Ebenezer thinks it might hurt the porter's feelings if I seem to be grumbling."

"I don't believe I shall ever be able to bring myself to call him 'Ebenezer,'" said Mrs. Cratchit, removing her bonnet and experimenting with another angle.

Her husband furiously jotted down figures in a small notebook.

"I wish to goodness he had let me stay late last night as I wanted to," he said. "What with all this talk of Reform, and tampering with the Corn Laws, and heaven knows what else, I can see a lot of stormy weather ahead for business-men who lack a sense of responsibility."

He was still doing calculations when Belinda Cratchit, Master Peter Cratchit and the two young Cratchits began to drift into the room. They were followed by Tiny Tim, now entirely recovered from his former indisposition. Tiny Tim was still carrying his small crutch, for use either as a walking stick or weapon of offence, and he now proceeded to poke the blazing fire with it. Belinda Cratchit took up the bonnet which her mother had left by its cardboard box and tried it on herself. Master Peter Cratchit lit a cigar.

"I thought I told you I didn't like a lot of cigar smoke in the room just before luncheon," said his father irritably.

Master Peter Cratchit ignored this protest.

"I suppose Scrooge is coming as usual," he observed.

"Of course Mr. Scrooge is coming," said Bob Cratchit. "And if you hope to get a good place in the firm you must accustom yourself to being civil to Mr. Scrooge. After all, it isn't much to ask."

"I'm not so sure that I'm all that keen to go into the firm now," said



"Slip out and get another Christmas card, dear, the *Jone es* cat has sent ours one."



"The doctor ordered a complete change of scene—so we're off to Jamaica."

Master Peter Cratchit languidly. "What's all this talk about the name being changed from Scrooge & Marley? People don't speak about the firm in the way they used to. Hasn't got the same tone, they say."

"Find a job for yourself then," said Bob Cratchit tartly, "but don't add to my Christmas troubles by arguing. Now, come on. We must get down to business. It is getting late. Where is Scrooge going to sit this year? His usual place?"

"I don't see why I should have to sit next to him again this Christmas," said Belinda Cratchit; "all that horse-play is really too boring for words. Why can't he be next to Tiny Tim or the other two for a change? He is always saying how keen he is on children. He might at least keep them quieter than they are being now."

She pointed to where the two young Cratchits were rolling over and over on the floor in a fearsome quarrel, while

Tiny Tim poked them each indiscriminately with his little crutch.

At that moment there was a tremendous hammering on the door accompanied by the strains of mouth-organ and snatches of *Good King Wenceslas*. Mrs. Cratchit had been about to separate the children, but now silence

fell over the room, and the two young Cratchits themselves rose soberly to their feet. Bob Cratchit tiptoed to the window. When he turned once more to the room there was a touch of moisture on his brow. His voice was husky. He said "This year he has come dressed as Father Christmas . . ."

Progress

THE washer hums; the rotary drier spins;
The steam-iron snuffles, straining at the flex.
Hanging from plastic hangers by the necks
The drip-drys pitter into empty tins.

The suction-cleaner sucks; the peeler peels;
Polish glows pale beneath revolving brushes;
The cake-mix cakes; the pressure-cooker shushes;
Dish-washer water whirls and whips and wheels.

And in the time these slaves save we can save,
Slaving part-time, the instalments on each slave.

HAZEL TOWNSON

The Modern Child's Guide to Relations

By ANGELA MILNE

GRANDPA. The man who pays your school bills. He does free-lance dog-minding and photographic modelling and lives in Chelsea in a one-room luxury flat. This doesn't mean he's *rich*, it just means the walls are so thin he can hear the people next door striking matches. Those funny words Grandpa uses are not swearing but a language called Latin. He was one of the last to learn it before the Government closed it down.

Grandma. Look in the little attic, the one with the Jeffrey Farnols shoring up the camp-bed. Do you see someone a bit like Mummy or Daddy but much younger and prettier? No, of course not. Grandma would hardly be skulking in her room even if it is her half-hour off. Actually you can hear her overhead re-tiling the roof. How Grandma also loves to cook, wash, teach you the Charleston and spend Sunday morning in the Reptile House!

Great-Grandparents. These used to be rare, and even now are interesting because they have got a room called a "dining-room." Next time you are asked to lunch take a peep. The inscribed Indian silver rose-bowl is genuine pre-1947. The motor-scooter has been added. The funny smell everywhere is the new furniture polish recipe Great-Grandpa boiled up this morning. He has got the parquet good and dangerous now. Perhaps you should no longer hurl yourself from the ninth stair to the back of Great-Grandma's neck. She may *seem* tough humping those jumble sale wardrobes, but have you noticed how pale blue her hair is getting?

Daddy. Daddy is what goes into the drip-dry shirts which are always dripping over your bath. Does Daddy look glum these days? That is because he is what is called a Salaried Class and must slave to earn Mummy's income-tax. (See Mummy, *Professional*.)

Has Daddy got any funny little ways? Does he take doors off and forget to re-hang them, or believe the Moon is hollow on the far side? Then why not start a notebook *now* and catch the fashion for gentle Father books the minute it comes round?

Daddy, Type II. Just possibly, if you are a very modern child, your Daddy

lives in the Bahamas and sends you water-skis for Christmas. In that case watch out. Do you want to be scooped up by a passing taxi and tipped out of a potato sack on the sun deck of the *Queen Mary* into the arms of a huge blonde in Persian lamb who keeps telling the reporters she only wants to be a mother to you? Of course you do. But be a sport. Look what it cost your Grandpa to get you back last time.

Sister. If you are a boy, a sister is the *other* child in your family.

Brother. If you are a girl, this is.

Steps, Halves, etc. What glossy-magazine readers puzzle over in those drawing-room photographs where ten children sit round or on one couple of grown-ups. If you are one of the ten it's all right for you. But the poor readers are having to work out five lots from three surnames.

Mummy, Professional. The professional Mummy knows about Balanced Teas for Sturdy Limbs, Fun on Wet Afternoons, Running Up Cuddly Toys, everything. If you want to know too, read Mummy's page in *Home and Fashion*. A Mummy can also be professional in a non-Mummy way like Parliament or designing dog-collars. This is jollier for you because of the background humour—water-pistols, grass-snakes, runny ice-lollies—you are supposed to provide when reporters call, but the perks and free samples are not so good.

Mummy, Home-Loving. A Mummy who has got to manage without Grandma for the next fortnight. Why Mummy looks so fed up working her nice new electronic dish-washer and magnetic silicone

duster is because she has a science degree and is not *using* it. But an educated Mummy about the house can be a real companion—if you keep out of her way.

Uncles, Aunts. Quiet humdrum married couples who get their incomes from I.T.V. or publicity rackets and live in made-over slices of Victorian Gothic mansions, playing the Louis Armstrongs and frying aubergines in Tunisian claret and painting blue fish round the bath. Times are hard for these worthy folk as for all grown-ups. Don't you think, you bloated capitalist, you might start slipping them the odd half-crown?

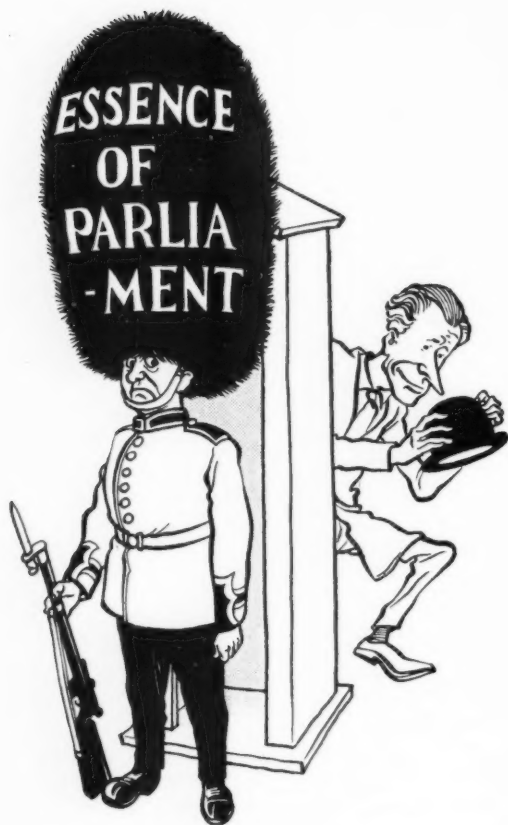
Lines for Outsiders

SWIFT was not *angry*: anger is One seventh of man's deformities. His *sæva indignatio* Let a self-blinded notion know What was its motivating mote— But nothing that he ever wrote Was centred so self-consciously On the beam in his own "I."

PATRIC DICKINSON



"Have you anything designed from a position about midway between Anglo-Catholicism and Scientific Humanism?"



WHAT a dreadful fate it must be to be called after a traditional popular song. Ever since he descended from the font Mr. Peel must have been continually meeting funny men who shout out "view-halloo!" or "D'ye ken John Peel?" in the belief that Mr. Peel will never have heard the joke before. Long ago he must have wished that his parents had given him any other name—perhaps have even been prepared to settle for "Robert" at a pinch—perhaps even envied those other by-election candidates at Garston whose faces got mixed up on the television and somehow—no one can imagine how—somebody noticed. It is a sign how quiet the House is these days that when Mr. Peel took his seat there was no hint of a hunting horn, not a "Yoicks!" was heard. There is little doubt that Mr. Eric Fletcher was right when later in the afternoon he said that it was the deliberate policy of Mr. Macmillan to keep its temperature low. Indeed when on Tuesday the House came to talk about recruiting, Members on either side seemed quite incapable of

getting excited about the recruiting fiasco. Colonel Wigg alone battled bravely for seriousness, but one Wigg does not make a green. Mr. Amery for the Government was content to comfort himself that "the figures are not as grim as Mr. Wigg has suggested." Mr. Amery's defence of the Government against the Opposition was rather like Gilbert's defence of the Reverend Hooper:

*Your mind is not so blank
As that of Hopley Porter,
Who holds a curate's rank
At Assesmilk-cum-Worter.*

Mr. Sandys' delicious argument that by proposing to spend £25 millions in South Uist and then not spending it he had saved £25 millions smacked on the other hand rather of the Wallet of Kai Lung than of the Bab Ballads.

Yet this was really Lords' Week. "Rats," says a character in one of Upton Sinclair's Larry Budd books, "is more rational than men.

Men think about all sorts of things, but rats only think about rats." It would be perhaps invidious to say that the distinction between Lords and Commons is much the same, but certainly while the Commons turn out in force to talk about all sorts of things, the Lords only turn out in force to talk about the future of the Lords. It was so on Tuesday. This must be the first time that a Government has ever brought in a bill the express purpose of which was to strengthen the Opposition. But it is a purpose that is by no means easy of achievement. As with horses to the water, you can appoint Socialists to the Lords, but how can you get them to go there? And no more moving spectacle can be imagined than that of a Conservative Chief Whip begging a few noble lords to go into the "No" lobby just to make a game of it.

Lord Home is rather like a character in one of his brother's plays who is brought on to the stage in order to be ragged, and most of the first day was taken up with peers explaining why they would not vote against the bill though they did not think that it would do any

good—Lord Salisbury because the hereditary peers were not reduced, Lord Alexander because they were not abolished, both because life peers were not paid, Lord Airie and Lord Ferrers "on account of the women." Lord Salisbury took upon himself the role of Cassandra, prophesying that this would be the beginning of the end of the Lords, and for this he earned a truly magisterial rebuke from Lord Hailsham. But if Lord Salisbury was cast for Cassandra Lord Alexander was certainly cast for Stentor. Of all the voices raised in that debate his was incomparably the loudest, and even his colleagues on the Socialist front bench were unable to get properly to sleep. There was only one moment of what is known as tension. Lord Balfour of Burleigh was arguing that the Lords were necessary to "sound the alarm" when the Commons had exceeded their mandate. "Where do you get your mandate from to reverse a decision of the Commons?" asked Lord



"I speak as Cassandra."—Lord Salisbury



The House of Lords discusses the Wolfenden Report.

Alexander. "From the Constitution," answered Lord Balfour as confident as brass. But Lord Attlee was at once on his feet, quivering like a very little aspen leaf, to ask if the Lords had ever reversed a verdict of a Conservative Government. Poor Lord Balfour was bowled middle stump and Lord Attlee went back to a triumphant slumber.

I do not know how much Lord Airlie really minds about women in Parliament. But so long as it can all be kept as a joke the women always win. So to-day it all passed off with cracks about "My Blue Lady" and Lord Airlie's coat-of-arms, and unless something very surprising happens next week the women are home.

On the Wolfenden Report the Archbishop of Canterbury told a moving story about a young man who was followed all the way from Australia by a homosexual pursuer—though why such a curious operation was less likely to take place if the homosexual laws were abolished, as His Grace advocated, was far from clear. The Lord Chancellor made it plain enough that, so long as he was Lord Chancellor, nothing would be done, but I am afraid the whole atmosphere is deteriorating. These questions are very serious questions, but they are also questions in which the ribald find themselves at home. The serious arguments for one policy or another are comparatively few, easily exhausted and soon become boring,

and if we are to go on talking and talking and never do anything the whole subject will rapidly become a public joke. The Bishop of St. Albans told a story of a Rural Dean who went down to investigate the life of prostitutes but found that the prostitutes had all formed themselves into a club to which he was unable to obtain admission. I do not suppose that the Bishop intended it entirely as a funny story, but that is the way it was to their lordships. The prostitutes, it was agreed, could not be abolished, and we did not want them on the streets. Where then should they go? If they went to the pubs the pub-keepers objected. How gracious of their lordships to discuss such a subject in between two days devoted to considering whether women should be admitted into their own Chamber!

The debate on privilege in the Commons on Wednesday was nominally on a very narrow point—whether the opinion of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council should be taken. The other question whether Mr. Strauss's letter to Mr. Maudling was "a proceeding in Parliament" was not immediately at issue, though indeed a number of Members took their chance to slip in their opinion on it. Mr. Chuter Ede, who would have been so much more at home had he been born in the seventeenth century, made a speech as eloquent as it was preposterous about protecting Members of the House

against the tyranny of the Executive. His speech would have been more appropriate had the motion been one for abolishing Whips. Jealous for the honour of the House, he was against exact definitions of privilege, but Mr. Pickthorn made the good point that it is absurd to discuss these matters in a spirit of House-of-Commons loyalty "like being Cambridge at the Boat Race"; Sir Lionel Heald warned Members not to be too pompous; and Mr. Herbert Morrison, in an admirable speech, argued that keeping privilege vague might serve the House well enough, but that members of the public had rights—a right to know where they stood—as well as Members of Parliament. CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

3 3

"CHANGES OF NAME"

Siemens Brothers & Co., Ltd., Caxton House, Tothill Street, S.W.1. Name changed to Siemens Edison Swan Ltd., on June 28, 1957.

Siemens-Ediswan Ltd., Crown House, Aldwych, W.C.2. Name changed to Siemens Brothers & Co., Ltd., on June 28, 1957.

Edison Swan Electric Co. (Branches) Ltd., 155 Charing Cross Road, W.C.2. Name changed to Edison Swan Electric Co., Ltd., on June 28, 1957.

Edison Swan Electric Co., Ltd., 155 Charing Cross Road, W.C.2. Name changed to Edison Swan Electric Co. (Branches) Ltd., on June 28, 1957.

Wireless and Electrical Trader

Always said no one really understands electricity.



"How long has that been there?"



In the City

The Manager Will See You Now, Sir

THIS is the season of the year when it pays to know your bank manager. Pretty soon now you'll find your mail increasing with the width of the postman's grin, and not all, by any means, of the additional stationery dumped on your mat will consist of Christmas cards. There'll be window-enveloped affairs from various Government departments and from service industries in the public sector. There'll be begging letters from school, rating and licensing authorities, clubs, societies, friends and relations. Before December is out you will certainly experience a shrinkage of your liquid assets, and it is quite likely that you will wish to share this experience with your bank manager, Mr. . . . Mr. . . . er . . .

To forget his name is unpardonable. Good heavens, you expect him to remember *yours*, don't you! And the names of your children, and their schools, and your important connections, and the uniqueness of your financial circumstances. In fact you expect him to remember everything about you except the funny story you told him last August and propose to tell him again. Don't forget his name: I know for a fact that one bank manager's interpretation of the credit squeeze can be fiercely doctrinaire when customers fluff his patronymic.

And don't joke about office hours. Bank managers don't clock in at 10 a.m., spend two hours over lunch at the Rotary Club and drive off from the first tee at 3.05 p.m. While you are still climbing the slopes of the Bank Underground they are at their desks ploughing through the first avalanche of the day: when you are sneaking back to suburbia before the rush-hour they are still dotting and carrying behind locked doors. (I do admit, however, that they are *surprisingly* good golfers.)

Don't jest about their lolly, their salaries. Branch bank managers—and there are some ten thousand of them in the country—earn on average from £1,500 to £2,000 a year, and are expected to look decently prosperous on it. Most of

the big banks have recently adopted the practice of featuring the ideal manager in their press advertisements. He is a tall, cool devil with horn-rimmed glasses and cheeks furrowed by interesting lines. He is dressed soberly and neatly, a sartorial merger between the Institute of Directors and the Man from the Pru. He has beautiful hands.

"You are quite right, Miss Probyns," he says, "to place your affairs in our hands. We are particularly experienced in the handling of smaller accounts. Once we have your instructions you can forget all about your annual subscription to the Polynesian Culture Federation. Now about that will . . ."

Don't threaten to take your overdraft elsewhere. Banks may be competitive, fiercely so, but there is some unwritten law that makes even a mention of rival organizations distasteful and distressing



In the Country

Neglected Shrines

THE tourist trade took over £72,000,000 last year. This was no peanut, we were told. And it seems horribly probable that as our exports decline we shall tend to rely more and more on our tabernacles and ruins.

We shall not be downhearted. After all nothing can take our beautiful scenery away from us—except our own actions. And have we not some of the best hotels, hostelrys and inns in the whole of Europe? Why should we be despondent so long as we have English hospitality and English *table d'hôte* up our sleeves? Are they not as solid a reserve as any Chancellor could wish for? It does not matter if our seams of coal should go undug so long as we can still bake our frivolous and delectable pastries and wholesome wheaten loaves. And nobody can say that our puddings are not gilt-edged. Indeed stability is our speciality, especially in our soufflés.

Of course it's not so easy for some counties to increase their tourist traffic.

to bank managers. If you breathe the words National Provincial or Lloyds, Barclays, Westminster, Midland, District, Martins, and so on, your financial counsellor will wince and change the subject. Autres banks, autres mœurs.

Finally, don't expect your bank manager to lend you more than £1,500 off the peg. There are limits beyond which the credit extended by the branches cannot soar. If you ask for more, and have securities or prospects worthy of consideration, your cap will be passed on to a higher authority. And don't ask casually for £1,499: I've tried it.

There is one more thing. Don't forget that there's a credit squeeze and that the refusal of a loan hurts the bank manager almost as much as it hurts you. Especially so at Christmas time.

MAMMON

* * *

We can't all have Stratford. But it is amazing what personalities we have still waiting to be exploited. All we have to do is first to discover them for ourselves. For instance why is the Borough of Shoreditch not cashing in on a shrine to the bricklayer Ben Jonson? And when will Devon discover that Coleridge was born there? How is it that we are so profligate with our assets and resources that we haven't yet tapped old Purcell? There's oil there.

Some counties like Cornwall have, of course, a flying start. For Cornwall has Kilkhampton, and it was at that fabulously quaint old farmhouse there that the seventeenth-century poet and philosopher Isaac Pengilly was born. You can still see the wash-house there where he wrote his most enduring and endearing lyrics. And at the bottom of the garden the summer-house still stands where Pengilly imprisoned his third wife after she had tried to abscond with his second best mistress. There's a whole mine of culture at Kilkhampton waiting to be developed. The turnstiles could be clicking for seasons.

Those parts of the country which have no hero, poet or politician of the past to exhibit or exploit need not be in the least dismayed. All they have to do is to emulate Kilkhampton and sit down and invent one. After all, since we are all going to be equal in the future it's only fair that we should all be equal in our stake in the past.

RONALD DUNCAN



Smilby.



BOOKING OFFICE

Where Venice Sate in State . . .

The Castle of Fratta. By Ippolito Nievo.
Translated by Lovett F. Edwards. Oxford,
21/-

TO recommend the translation of an Italian novel of some three hundred thousand words written just a hundred years ago—that is to say a book about four times the length of the average novel of to-day—is not a thing to do lightly. The fact that it is also stated to be a classic immediately begets the suspicion that it may be boring. Nothing could be farther from the truth. *The Castle of Fratta* is written with tremendous, almost Tolstoyan, power and with an irony over which the author is always in complete command.

Ippolito Nievo (1831-1861), who died during the wars of the Italian *Risorgimento*, was of patrician Venetian origin. His story is partly—indeed mainly—a picture of the decline of the Venetian Republic; partly the chronicle of the hero Carlo Altaviti's love for his cousin, Pisana. The handling of both these themes puts Nievo in a very high class as a novelist. Incredible as it may appear, he wrote this work in eight months, no doubt putting everything he had into its composition—in some manner aware that he himself was not to survive.

The narrative opens about 1775, and begins by describing the life and personalities of the castles of the Venetian mainland where feudal life has gone on without much change from the Middle Ages, a region in which the former dominion of the Council of Ten of Venice has now become enfeebled. Nievo conveys with extraordinary skill the life of those days, when nationalism was just beginning to take an active form in a world where the word had hitherto possessed no meaning. Gradually we are led on to the invasion of Italy by the forces of Revolutionary France; and eventually to the confused period of conflict that preceded the unification of Italy.

The book has had various titles in

Italian, since its author died before he had time to revise his manuscript. It has been called *Confessions of an Octogenarian* (the hero writes as if he were eighty-four years old in 1858) and *The Confessions of an Italian*. I admit to finding both these titles preferable to that chosen—*The Castle of Fratta*—which seems to throw too much emphasis on the first half of the novel.

It is true that critics of this edition have tended to find a falling off in the second half of the story. Certainly the



account of the Castle of Fratta itself is magnificent, a genre picture of great force, a set piece of the kind loved by critics who are so often inclined to dislike any attempt to deal with those much more difficult landscapes where lack of hard blacks and whites defeats their delight in moralizing.

It seems to me that the latter half of the book is, if anything, better than the first. The former displays the end of mediæval feudalism in a society of wigs and lace ruffles; the latter, in its political confusion, the beginnings of our own time: science: liberalism: power politics: partisans: war: destruction. Much of the interest lies in the point of view of the hero, in principle a

supporter of the new order, but never blind to the failings of his own side or to the splendours of the past: a man to whom Bonaparte is a false and shabby tyrant, yet at the same time necessary to bring a new world to birth.

The personal relationships of the book are no less interesting. It is *de rigueur* nowadays to invoke the name of Proust if anything in the least degree subtle is described by a novelist, so that the hero's love affair with Pisana, with its many ups and downs, and his dealings with his own father—to name only two aspects of the book—might be legitimately described as Proustian.

("Chilly, my son? One can see you are without experience! It is just beneath such a composed and reserved manner that is hidden the most intense ardour and the most refined voluptuousness . . ." or "Oh memory, memory, how can I describe you? Our torment, our reward, our tyrant, you devour our days hour by hour, minute by minute and then restore them to us in a moment as in a symbol of eternity!")

The story of its translation is appropriate to the writer; Mr. Edwards read *The Castle of Fratta* in a prisoner-of-war camp and was so impressed that he was determined eventually to translate it. He took ten years to do so and has made a very good job of it indeed. His work has included a certain amount of "cutting," and it is true to say that the speed with which the book was written is at times indicated by an obvious need for revision. All the same, *The Castle of Fratta* is a great work. Its huge canvas shows every facet of the world familiar at one end of the scale from Stendhal's *Chartreuse de Parme*, and at the other from Sardou and Puccini's *Tosca*.

ANTHONY POWELL

Remembrance

Memoirs of a Catholic Girlhood. Mary McCarthy. Heinemann 21/-

To any professional novelist embarking upon an autobiography, the temptation to rearrange the actual events "so as to make a good story" is almost irresistible; and Miss McCarthy, after discussing the

problem of complete veracity in her preface, attempts an interesting solution by appending a series of epilogues analysing the element of truth in each separate episode: though this scrupulous method sometimes results in anti-climax, as when the cracking pay-off to her memoir of the egregious Uncle Myers (who "not only did nothing for a living but appeared to have no history") is qualified by her brother's inability to recall whether this relative by marriage indeed "planted" the stolen tin butterfly to provide an excuse for beating her once more with a razor-strop. The author remains unembittered by her bleak and harrowing childhood as a poor relation; her recollections of a convent education and other formative periods are affectionately amusing and objective: while the account of her loss of faith at the age of 12 is refreshingly free from the rancour and exhibitionism displayed by many lapsed Catholics when relating similar apostasies.

J. M-R.

A Reed Shaken by the Wind. Gavin Maxwell. Longmans, 21/-

The marshes of southern Iraq, that stretch down almost to the Persian gulf, are soon to be drained, when their inhabitants will be forced into an urban life straight from their primitive existence in reed huts floating on little man-made islands. Going with Wilfred Thesiger, already accepted by the marshmen as a friend and medicine-man, Gavin Maxwell visited them just in time. He travelled in a magnificent war-canoe laden with antibiotics; seldom staying anywhere more than one night, they explored freely, shooting for the pot and reaching the heart of the permanent marsh.

Mr. Maxwell has the observant eye



"Remember the hoo-ha about the Sputnik with the dog in it?"

and the descriptive skill deserved by a scenery so fantastic and unknown. In a book of unusual interest and charm, well illustrated, he tells us of fabulous bird life, of marvellous seasonal changes in the landscape, of primitive satiric dancing in the tiny space of a hut, and of the taboo-ridden society of a very simple but hospitable people.

E. O. D. K.

At Lady Molly's. Anthony Powell. Heinemann, 15/-

The fourth volume of *The Music of Time* is the most amusing and the most completely successful novel in the series. This picture of a society with all its qualities in decay except the ability to survive is not depressing because comedy, after all, is an assertion of the viability of private judgment. Also there is always something cheering about literary experiments that come off. Events are few: the narrator becomes engaged to Isobel Tolland, Widmerpool becomes engaged to a toughish widow and Mona Templar deserts the left-wing critic Quiggin for the left-wing peer Lord Warminster. The fabric of the book is gossip about character and situation rather than gossip about action.

Mr. Powell has always been able to invent the kind of novel he has needed. Comparisons with Proust underrate his originality. (For the game of influence-hunting a better tip is Lermontov.) The quiet, transparent surface, itself something new in social comedy, covers layer after layer of refinements of curiosity. Observant, ruthless and gay, the novel is both entertaining and as disquieting as *The Waste Land*.

R. G. G. P.

The Whole Voyald. William Saroyan. Faber, 15/-

To his latest volume of stories, written twenty years after his first collection, Mr. Saroyan contributes a preface called "A Writer's Declaration," which, as with everything of his, contains a great deal of sense with a fair percentage of the opposite. For instance, "Stop drinking when drinking tends to be an end in itself" (though it is usually too late then), as opposed to the assertion that young writers write "in order to expect pretty women to swarm around." A defensive note also creeps in: he denies writing propaganda during World War II, but what else could *The Human Comedy* be called? Mr. Saroyan is in urgent need of new material. These stories are variations on autobiographical themes already fully exploited: and while a writer's childhood may, properly handled, be absorbing, writers' children and their little ways are, unfortunately, not.

J. M-R.

Capability Brown. Dorothy Stroud. Country Life, 3 gns.

Miss Dorothy Stroud in this revised edition is able to give in an appendix a letter in which Lancelot Brown sets



"As city editor, Heathcliff, perhaps you'll explain why my paper failed to be mentioned in the Leakage inquiry."

down the essential qualities of a landscape garden. Brown's importance both as an architect and planner of parks has sometimes been neglected owing to the lack of material—he left no books of his theories—and to the faintly ludicrous nickname, which, as "Capey," pursued his son to Eton. It is therefore most interesting to read that in Brown's opinion a country seat "if right, be exactly fit for the owner, the Poet, and the Painter"; and as his work at Croome Court inspired one of Richard Wilson's most lyrical paintings he triumphantly vindicated his theory. Miss Stroud has herself vindicated Brown as the worthy follower of Vanburgh and Kent, the equal at some levels of his contemporary Robert Adam, and superior in many things to his junior Nash. When Brown's neighbour David Garrick consulted him as to the best means of linking the temple designed for him by Adam to the rest of his estate, Brown recommended a tunnel under the inconvenient road and Doctor Johnson supported the scheme, remarking "What can't be over-done, may be under-done."

V. G. P.

AT THE PLAY

The Tunnel of Love
(HER MAJESTY'S)
Paddle Your Own Canoe
(CRITERION)
The Tempest (DRURY LANE)

TWO comedies arriving together, one from Paris, the other from New York, invite comparison between what the French and the Americans think funny

in sex. As examples they seem to me fairly representative. *The Tunnel of Love* is bright with the rather adolescent cynicism of Broadway, as if the relations of men and women were just another subject to be majored in. It works the verbal jokes on adultery and pregnancy so assiduously that its authors, Joseph Fields and Peter de Vries, can be imagined sitting up with Roget's Thesaurus. Its people, one feels, are slightly over-awed by sex, and chatter knowingly about it only to cover their anxieties. This play, rescued by an abler cast than it deserves, is frequently on the edge of bad taste; it illustrates a puritan tradition trying desperately to be frivolous where its natural mood would be solemnity.

On the other hand *Paddle Your Own Canoe*, though it deals much less directly with the bedroom, approaches it with a magnificent Gallic assumption of fact that needs no Freudian prattle to bolster its courage. Sex to the Frenchman is as old as the hills. It is no less important to him because by the age of fifteen he has accepted it as he accepts the Eiffel Tower or a pat of butter on his tournedos. While he is fascinated by its vagaries in practice, he is easily bored by its theory,

and indeed is more fastidious than either the Americans or ourselves in his enjoyment of its bluer absurdities.

Paddle Your Own Canoe, wittily adapted by Lucienne Hill from Max Regnier's *Les Petites Têtes*, takes bigamy in its adult stride. It is mainly a study of female domestic tyranny, of two ogresses, mother and daughter, with the power to pulverize their men. The daughter, a winning blonde, had married a prosperous young boat-builder, reduced to lapdog status before going out to South America, six years earlier, on a business mission. He was reported drowned, and his wife has married her works manager, now beautifully trained to heel. When the play opens No. 1, mysteriously restored, has just announced his imminent arrival. In its panic the family dreams comfortingly that, corroded by malaria, he will have only a few short months to live; and then, more frighteningly, that he will come armed to the teeth, a monster of arrogance. In fact he turns out a sensible little man, who behaves with much more spirit than Enoch Arden. He is perfectly honest. Success in the jungle with a spinach joke which had always failed at home gave him back his self-respect; he has

faked his death to escape from his women, founded another more successful business, and has only returned for a friendly holiday. His wife and mother-in-law are put in their place immediately; he tells them that just as the Indians shrivel heads, so they have ruthlessly brain-washed his and his successor's and that of his pathetic father-in-law. And now that his is the right size again he declines to submit it for further treatment.

The comedy briskly traces the domestic effects of his rebellion, and the covert plotting of the women to recapture so valuable a prize. It has flat patches, but its spring is always being unwound and it ends at a gallop. It has travelled much better than most little boulevard frolics; the smell is of the Marne, not of Kensington, for the producer, Eleanor Fazan, appears to know France. All the hero's moods, whether real or imagined, are delightfully interpreted by Nigel Stock. The women are made horribly plausible by Violet Farebrother and Moira Lister. Roy Purcell gives a good account of the atrophied shell of the second husband, and Peter Vaughan irradiates a short scene as a lawyer who revels in the agonies of his clients. But the performance that shines all the time is Newton Blick's pottering father-in-law, so reduced mentally that he can scarcely finish a sentence, but finding it very restful.

The Tunnel of Love is much too long for its subject, an adoring but vaguely dissatisfied husband reluctantly obliged to adopt his own child by his single and disastrous excursion outside matrimony. At the curtain of the second act I reached for my hat in good faith. The characters are artificial, existing only in the forced brightness of their conversation, which flirts feverishly with the whole business of producing babies. This flirtation is quite dexterous, and there are some well turned lines, but one has soon had enough. More than anything the cast's good manners keep the play afloat; at the same time it is awkward that while everyone else treats it as comedy, Ian Carmichael as the hero sees it as farce. Working hard, he is only moderately amusing. Space forbids individual praise for a company that, given no great chances, wastes little.

Peter Brook's production of *The Tempest*, reviewed here in August, has come to Drury Lane for seven weeks. Whether his ingenuity has not a little swamped Shakespeare, out-Maskelyning the local magic, continues to be debatable, but there cannot be any doubt about the rare quality of John Gielgud's Prospero, played as an angry middle-aged man and not as a bearded dotard lost in a conjurer's dream. It is the most reasonable Prospero I have ever seen. Even with every third thought for the grave he is going back to Milan a match for all the rats on the town council. Debate or not,



Irene—MOIRA LISTER

Daniel—NIGEL STOCK

(*Paddle Your Own Canoe*)

this production is a gift for the school holidays.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Requiem for a Nun (Royal Court—4/12/57), a Faulkner tragedy. *Dinner With the Family* (New—9/10/57), good early Anouilh. *The Entertainer* (Palace—17/4/57), Laurence Olivier brilliant in a mediocre play. ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

The Ten Commandments
Man on Fire—Stopover Tokyo

USUALLY, when a picture is boring and irritating me and I can tell that it will go on boring and irritating me, I leave it after twenty minutes or half an hour and write nothing about it. It is perhaps some indication of the power of publicity that I felt called on to keep watching *The Ten Commandments* (Director: Cecil B. DeMille) for just over an hour, and that I feel called on to start with a mention of it here; because I knew in the first ten minutes—apart from having felt pretty sure beforehand—that it was not for me. It is made for the modern equivalent of the audience that loved the 1924 version, and if there are many representatives of that among my readers they haven't understood most of what I have been writing for the last twenty years. I don't think I loved the 1924 film very much, but in those days my standards were different (I was fourteen at the time) and I saw it with interest. To-day, to hold my attention a film has to give me some kind of dramatic, visual, literary, intellectual or aesthetic pleasure, and I see an average of at least three in every two weeks that do this. *The Ten Commandments* is not one of them. The nearest it gets to visual beauty is the huge vista of temple-building or what not (which is spectacular sensationalism) and the decoration of palaces or gardens or people (which is laborious reconstruction of things that are works of art in their own right); most of the dialogue is pompous circumlocution encrusted with commonplace metaphor; the characters are simple personifications of good, evil, majesty, villainy or whatever; and you know the story. And yet tremendous numbers of people will take it for a great and important work of art and even hypnotize themselves into believing they enjoyed it, merely out of reverence for the subject—which will keep even more from admitting they didn't.

And as it happens, this week there were no fewer than four other films all of which I saw with some kind of pleasure. None of them is great or important, but in any other week I might have led the article with any one of them. They are all good entertainment and all were made with intelligence, imagination and



Deep depression filling up

[*The Ten Commandments*]

perception for people of intelligence, imagination and perception in the audience. The fact that they can't make a profit out of those people may be judged from the advertisements, which are calculated to scare them away, while luring in forty times as many who would enjoy the films just as much if they were one-tenth as well made.

The best I think is *Man on Fire* (Director: Ranald MacDougall). The advertisements, and the song which I suppose was written to make the title stick in your head ("When you're in love—you're a man awn fi-er"), are totally misleading: this man is on fire because he finds himself losing his ten-year-old son to his divorced wife. He takes a passionate pride in the boy, who has been happy with him for years, and the mother has remarried; at a court hearing, a woman judge (against her own wish, but because she thinks it right—this is beautifully shown) awards the mother complete custody. After some bitterness on both sides, self-sacrifice provides a happy ending. Script, direction and acting are all quite admirable: Bing Crosby in a straight part gives an excellently sensitive, ironic performance as the father, the boy (Malcolm Brodrick) is good, and the detail keeps one constantly interested and entertained.

Another is *Stopover Tokyo* (Director: Richard L. Breen), a handsomely-produced spy thriller from the novel by John P. Marquand. One can recognize the "front office" motive for the attractive Japanese background: it is a noticeable trend in U.S. films lately to woo the Japanese, for obvious reasons. Never-

theless the point of any excitement-and-suspense story is the excitement and the suspense; once it is credibly and interestingly established that X wishes to kill or otherwise defeat Y, one's interest is in the pursuit, and what started it is forgotten. This is very well done indeed. I believe that if they'd been told beforehand it was directed by Hitchcock, some people who now dismiss it casually would be falling apart with admiration.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The other two I found quite enjoyable were *Until They Sail*, essentially a "woman's story" about four New Zealand sisters in wartime but skilfully and entertainingly done; and *The Lady Takes a Flyer*, a more robustly obvious piece about the marital difficulties of a footloose air-pilot, full of good fun and observation (with another plug for Japan). Best in London: still the French two, *He Who Must Die* (6/11/57) and *Porte des Lilas* (13/11/57). The excellent quiet Western, *The Tin Star* (4/12/57), and, of course, *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57) continue. There is also the Norman Wisdom film *Just My Luck*, which to my immense surprise, almost stupefaction, turns out to be one of the best British comedies I have seen for years. More next week.

The Lady Takes a Flyer is also among the releases, but the best is the British *The Birthday Present* (13/11/57), admirably gripping and convincing little story of a man who tried to smuggle a watch. A reissue, which had good things but plot trouble—*White Christmas* (17/11/54).

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR Old Familiar and Stone Faces

THE I.T.A. presentation of the Columbia Broadcasting System's TV profile of Sir Winston Churchill, "The Man of the Century," was wonderfully exciting. For an hour (commercials excepted) the story of the great man's life unfolded in a brilliant montage of assorted newsreel and mood music, and the story justified its title: it will be miraculous if before the year 2000 any other man is endowed with so much of so many qualities—courage, humour, resolution, industry and literary ability.

This film could have been made only by the Americans. American film-makers are never afraid of whole-hearted appeals to the emotions, and they are not restrained—as more often than not our native TV producers and editors are—by a pathological zeal for understatement and discretionary valour. The British would have devised a much more faithful profile, one explaining the man's failures and qualifying where necessary some of his blazoned successes, and of course the end product would have been much less emotional and heroic. On the whole I prefer our native methods: they are more cautious, but they are also less likely to confuse truth with fiction, drama with melodrama.

I am quite certain that the Americans would try to charge a filmed life of Billy Graham, Liberace or Roosevelt with an equal quantity of warmth, fervour and significance, and inevitably this knowledge adds a tincture of cynicism even to their finest productions. For all that



Man of the Century

"The Man of the Century" was a truly memorable hour of television.

J. B. Priestley's play *The Stone Faces*, specially written for television, has received a very mixed reception. I enjoyed this play. It was streets ahead of the average fare offered by the little screen; it was slight in subject matter but handsomely contrived, beautifully acted and intelligently produced. Luise Rainer played Inga, a Hollywood star on the run from the publicity hounds, scandal sheets and candid camera men. Suitably disguised by the dark glasses of Garbo, she seeks peace at a small hotel in the wilds of southern Mexico and runs smack into an old flame, Dr. Ames, played by Duncan Lamont. There are three days of idyllic love-making, civilized chit-chat and high-spirited clowning: then the other ladies in the party, Dr. Ames's archaeological assistant (Helen

Horton) and the hotelier's wife (Frances Rowe), allow their jealousy to bitch things up. They let the press know of Inga's hide-out.

Ames flees before the impending storm of publicity, and Inga is trapped. A lost and terrified bird, she darts to her death against the hard stone face of an Aztec ruin. Finis.

A goodish, topical short story, nothing more. But Priestley somehow manages to make the comparatively trivial issues loom large enough to make good drama, and he decorates the dish with the cynical drunken table talk of a disillusioned writer (Wilfrid Lawson) who—if we omit the cynicism and drink—may be regarded as a self-caricature of Priestley himself. There was also a burst of bravura comedy

which seemed out of place and out of date.

Luise Rainer played Inga with nervous, bewitching and entirely convincing skill.

Arthur Hailey's new play *Seeds of Power*, while not quite in the class of his thriller *Flight into Danger*, is a staggeringly realistic piece of science fiction. I suppose the chief honours must go to the production team and camera men who converted Hailey's topical yarn about the teething troubles of an atomic energy plant into this Canadian TV spellbinder. Not a second was wasted: every picture told its story and there was no let up in suspense. Excellent entertainment.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

Rachel Ferguson

We regret to record the death of Rachel Ferguson, who was a regular contributor to *Punch*, over the signature "Rachel," during the editorship of Sir Owen Seaman.



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